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MAXWELL.

CHAPTER I.

"Wedded love is founded on esteem,
Which the fair merits of the mind engage.
For these are charms that never can decay:
But time, which gives new whiteness to the swan,
Improves their lustre." FENTON.

EDWARD now felt himself so completely beaten by circumstances, that he could scarcely rally his spirits sufficiently to dine in company; but he was conscious that it was a duty which, however painful the effort might be to himself, he most unquestionably ought to perform; and accordingly, with his father, sister, brother-in-law, Miss Geraldine O'Conochie, Miss Fletcher, and the two Mosses, he sat down to the hospitable board of the surgeon, agitated by a host of passions and feelings, of all of which,

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however, to do him justice, regret at having unintentionally discovered what he could not but consider his father's weakness, decidedly was uppermost.

He had formed a design, which he nursed in secret, and which he proposed putting into execution the moment after the bride and bridegroom had taken their departure for Brighton on the following day, which had for its object, neither more nor less than discovering the residence of the captain of the good ship Whilelmina, which had sailed, and ascertaining whether the beautiful creature whom he had lost, was actually the gentleman's wife; or, if that were not the case, whether his wife, if she remained at home during his voyage, could give him any account of the young lady, who, he was quite convinced, was a passenger in the Whilelmina, and who, at the very moment he was thinking of her, was, in all human probability, sailing across the salt seas to some far distant port.

I really believe, that in the excitement of the ardent desire Edward felt to ascertain more particulars concerning his beautiful vision, the anxiety to convince himself of the true nature of his father's connexion and acquaintance with her, had no inconsiderable share; for most as-

suredly, as I have already endeavoured to express, what he *had* seen, had so unsettled his feelings, that he was not yet able to meet his respectable parent without restraint, or maintain a conversational intercourse with him, without a considerable degree of embarrassment.

As the period for Kate's marriage approached, Apperton seemed more and more occupied with her father; they were long and frequently closeted together, until at length Kate herself was summoned to the library, where she was directed to sign certain papers and parchments, which had been brought thither by the family solicitor, the intent or purport of which she neither understood nor sought to know. Her father's desire that she should affix her name to them, was quite sufficient to ensure her obedience, convinced, as she was, that with his sanction she could do no act likely to produce pain or repentance, at any future period of her existence.

When she left the library, after having performed the required ceremony, she felt as if she had signed the death-warrant of her happiness; and yet she could scarcely suffer such a feeling to hold any lengthened sway in her mind, because her own good sense told her, that she

should have weighed all the circumstances of her marriage with Apperton, at a time when the consideration of them might have been (had she chosen) followed by the rejection of his offer, and not have suffered matters to go to extremities, as they now had gone; besides, she struggled to check the emotions by which she felt her heart agitated, not only by the recollection that it was now too late to retract, but by a confirmed belief, that, let the extent of her happiness in marriage be what it might, she had, in the connexion with Apperton, as good a chance of contentedness (which was all she now hoped for) as she could have expected in any other.

As the day drew to its close, the countenance of Godfrey Moss assumed a hundred different expressions; while the bridegroom elect seemed to bear the near approach of his happiness with a philosophy which his enemies might have called indifference. He had passed great part of the forenoon in consultation with Maxwell, and some time of the afternoon in superintending the preparation of the chariot, which he had bought at the bazaar. It was the first close carriage he had ever possessed, and of course was not a new one, for it may be remarked, that whenever a rising man in middling life mounts a car-

riage, he begins by buying a second-hand one; the next he has, perhaps he builds, but never the first.

Edward was more than usually restless during the day; his determination to explore the unknown regions of Bermondsey, and seek out the residence of Captain Randolph, of the good ship Whilelmina, was fixed; but he found it would be impossible for him to execute it until the morrow: in the mean time, he endeavoured to console himself by thinking, that the lovely girl might be the identical Mrs. Randolph, of whom the old watermen had spoken. She might, too, remain in England, perhaps at Bermondsey, while her husband was ploughing the salt seas—circling the round world:—and then—what then?—there stood his father, talking to Miss O'Conochie, in precisely the same attitude, with the same energetic action, and the same winning smile, as he had seen him display while conversing with his mysterious beauty in the Green Park.

At length came dinner—tea—supper; the bridesmaids departed, to return at nine o'clock in the morning—then went Apperton, for the last time, to his bachelor's room; Moss and his brother succeeded; and then retired to their

respective beds the family themselves. It seemed now, that the affair was irrevocably concluded; in nine short hours, Kate Maxwell would have ceased to exist, and have begun a new life as Mrs. Apperton.

It turned out, however, that the main incident of the morrow, was not to be the only interesting one—but I must not anticipate.

At eight o'clock in the morning, nearly all the parties concerned in the momentous ceremony were assembled. By half-past eight, Miss Fletcher arrived, looking very pale, and very cold, and very sleepy; and in another quarter of an hour, Miss O'Conochie made her appearance, giving evidence, by her looks, that she was as unaccustomed to early rising as her fair colleague. Edward received them in the drawing-room, and for a moment thought Miss Fletcher looked interesting; in which opinion, no doubt, Miss Fletcher herself entirely coincided: but as he had now established a test of beauty in his mind, in the person of his mysterious young lady, the impression went off again very soon, notwithstanding a little skilful play with a pair of soft languishing blue eyes, into which "Miss F." (as Miss O'Conochie called her), contrived, upon this special occasion, to throw an expres-

sion of archness not usually exhibited by her, upon ordinary occasions, or in every day society.

The Mosses made their appearance; the vicar desiring to know the precise minute at which the ceremony was to take place, in order that he might betake himself to the church some short time in advance of the "procession," in order that they might not have to wait for his robing on their arrival.

Katharine had not yet shown herself; and Miss O'Conochie proceeded to the commencement of her important duties, by visiting the bride in her dressing-room. Apperton came in a new stone-blue coat and gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, fawn-coloured breeches, with bunches of bows at the knee, white silk stockings, and a new pair of pumps; nothing could be fresher than his appearance, his coat was so very blue, his buttons were so very bright, his hands were so very red, and his neckcloth was so very white, that he perfectly dazzled Miss Fletcher, whose cheek he proceeded to kiss, upon his entrance into the dining-room.

Whether this is the privilege of a bridegroom, or an established custom upon similar occasions, I do not, as far as any personal knowledge of my own goes, pretend to know. The chaste

salute, however, was a hearty smack, which produced a slight blush on Miss Fletcher's cheek, and an exclamation of "La! Mr. Apperton!" which, in its tone and expression, certainly partook more of surprise than anger. It would have made the thing personal not to have served Miss Geraldine O'Conochie in a similar way when she returned to the room; and accordingly she was subjected to precisely the same process: she, however, received the shock with infinitely greater philosophy and fortitude than Miss Fletcher; for, after the report upon her cheek, no sound of either anger or surprise was heard; on the contrary, she took the bridegroom's hand, and gave it what might be fairly called a hearty shake.

At length came down Miss Maxwell herself, more cold and more sleepy than any of her friends and companions; her eyes betrayed the fact that she had slumbered little during the night; yet she smiled, and received the affectionate salute and embrace of her betrothed with a look of complacency, even beyond her father's hopes. Maxwell, upon being informed by Edward of the evolutions which had been performed by the stockbroker upon the cheeks of the ladies, very much applauded the scheme, and immediately

taking advantage of the precedent, repeated the operation upon both of them; after which Edward, for fear of being thought either dull or uncivil, followed the excellent example of his amiable parent.

Moss sat in his armed chair, taking snuff and looking on with wonder at what was passing.

"Now, Mousetrap," said the elder Maxwell, "now is *your* turn."

"My turn at what?" said Godfrey, "psha, trash, slabber!"

Moss had evidently been forced out of bed too early, and most undoubtedly would have said something excessively rude in half a moment, had not his brother announced his departure, in order to be in readiness for the ceremony; on which Godfrey, taking advantage of the carriage which was to convey the vicar to church, betook himself with that reverend gentleman in the advanced guard of the march.

In a country wedding there is a joyousness and gaiety quite unknown in metropolitan marriages. The churchyard filled with expecting tenants, waiting to catch a glimpse of their landlord's daughter and the lover of her choice. Shouting children and ringing bells announce the coming of the bridal *cortege*, and mirth and

jollity crown the conclusion of the ceremony On the occasion of which I am now to speak, there was any thing but gaiety or mirth. It was a wretched morning; there fell a mizzling rain through the peas-soup atmosphere of London, which chilled every living thing, while a sort of smoky, misty, foggy vapour, hovering over the ground, made "darkness only visible." To prove in a few words the badness of the weather, it is only necessary to say, that, as the shining bridegroom handed his amiable Kitty into the carriage at her father's door, he observed, at that crisis of affairs, "that he thought they should have a wretched journey of it to Brighton."

Wretched!—Any journey with one's bride wretched! What has rain or cold to do with the warmth and sunshine of the heart? Siberia, with the one loved being, would be as blooming, as cheering, and as fertile, as Italy; a dungeon so accompanied, more delightful than the brightest palace of the east without her; but not to Mr. Apperton,—who, like hackney-coach horses, had his work and recreation limited by the bills of mortality; who had not been twenty miles from the metropolis in as many years: who believed Richmond Hill one of the highest

mountains in Europe, and considered Severndroog Castle, on Shooter's Hill, a perfectly inaccessible fortress. It is true, he had been to Margate, on the salt sea, in a steam-boat; but, the moment he embarked at the Tower stairs, he sat himself down in a sort of coffee-house box in the cabin, with the daily newspaper in his pocket, and never left his corner till he was bumped ashore on Jarvis's jetty. A journey of fifty miles to Apperton formed such a large amount on the debit side of his day's happiness, that to have to undertake it, with all the accompaniments of wind and rain, was to him a matter of sufficient importance to make him forget, in the contemplation of it, that he had to enjoy the society of an amiable, accomplished young woman during its progress, and that too with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and pre-eminences of a husband; forgetting, in short, that all her accomplishments, all her amiability, with herself into the bargain, were decidedly his own: but so it was—the weather had put him out of sorts, and the marriage procession, consisting of two carriages, had nearly reached St. James's church, where the indissoluble knot was to be tied, before he recovered his serenity, or rubbed quite dry and clean four or five of his new gilt but-

tons, which had been moistened by that indescribable humidity for which the atmosphere of London, at certain periods of the year, is celebrated.

At the Jermyn-street door of St. James's church descended the hymeneal party; Kate and her bridesmaids; the two Maxwells and the bridegroom—Moss the layman, was already in the church, seated in a pew, out of which he wriggled himself as they approached.

"Infernal cold, Mack," said he; "I thought your coach had broken down. I have seen two pair of fools settled for life before you came, and now—ugh!"

This sound, indicative of his utter disapprobation of something, was followed by a look at Apperton, who certainly, when frisky, was by no means graceful; indeed Kate herself thought she had never seen him to such a disadvantage, as when he was attempting to make the amiable in his way through the church.

It would be making what is too evidently bad, worse, to notice the frequent glances which were exchanged by Kate and her brother during their progress; they were not the mirthful, careless looks in which they were wont to converse; nor such as two persons, so connected,

should at such a moment have adopted towards each other: they two knew the secrets of each other's heart; and the expression of poor Kate's countenance, when her fond and affectionate Edward last saw it, before she became a wife, convinced him that now the moment of trial was come, it would require all the strength of her mind—all the firmness of her resolution—and all the command which he knew her to have over herself, to go through the ceremony without sinking under the weight of her now useless affliction.

The elder Maxwell saw not this, or if he did, chose not to show that he did: he was gay and cheerful, and his fine countenance was heightened by a smile of contentment and pleasure. In the marriage now to be celebrated, he secured the interest and activity of his speculating son-in-law—he saw new comforts for his daughter—new riches for himself; and all that he lamented was, the loss of Jane's fortune, which he could not but feel Edward had literally thrown away.

They approached the altar—Miss O'Conochie was near the bride—Miss Fletcher held back, because the damp had affected her hair, which was as completely out of curl, as if

it had never been under the hand or tongs of her maid. The weather, however, was so dark and gloomy, that the failure had more effect upon herself than upon any body else; she was what a sportsman would call "dead beat" by this trivial mishap, and literally shrouded herself behind the hat and feathers of the gentle Geraldine, seeing that she, the Fletcher, had hoped on that very occasion to entangle in those very silken meshes, the heart of Mr. Edward Maxwell.

The parties arranged—the service began—and proceeded—Katharine pronounced, "I will," firmly and audibly—she was given away—she repeated after the clergyman the sacred words in which her troth was plighted—the ring was on her finger—they knelt before the altar—they were irrevocably united—they were pronounced married—and Doctor Ross, of Fudley cum Pipes, gave the impressive blessing; at the conclusion of which, a voice which sounded close to Edward, responded "AMEN!" with an earnestness and fervour that could have inspired no casual auditor.

The peculiarity of tone, the devotion, the feeling, the warmth, the piety, with which it was breathed, attracted Edward's attention, and

he involuntarily turned round to see who could have thus deeply interested themselves in the ceremony, when to his utter amazement he beheld, half concealed by one of the pillars which support the gallery—his unknown beauty.

Their eyes met—she caught hold of the object which had partly concealed her, for support. Edward was forced not only to remain where he was, but to seem to attend to the service, the greater part of which was yet to come. Where his feelings, his devotion, his fraternal love, or his filial duty were, I know not; his thoughts were not his own, for he could not recall them from the object he had just beheld; he could hear his heart beat while the ceremony was proceeding, and not daring again to look round, heard also the footsteps of some person retiring along the matted aisle. There he was; she would be gone before he could quit the church. What then? Why was she there? What was the link that bound her to his father? for he could not doubt that he was aware of her being in the church, after what he had himself seen in the park.

Then she was *not* gone in the ship which had sailed—what could she be doing on board such a vessel, and at such a time as that at

which he had traced her to it—in the evening? It was now clear, as he thought, that the connexion, whatever it was, which he knew from his own knowledge united her and his parent, could be in no way dishonourable, or he never would have brought her, or permitted her to have come to witness the ceremony of his daughter's marriage: of course it was by *his* permission, perhaps by his invitation, that she was there; and then why should this female unknown to him by name, and to his sister even by sight, respond to a blessing invoked upon her, and a prayer for her happiness, with a fervour and ardency which nothing short of intimate consanguinity could inspire? Conceive what a crowd of thoughts, of fears, of doubts, of hopes, of pains, and anxieties, were whirling in poor Edward's brain during the explanation of the marriage duties, which seemed to him hours in length, and which at its conclusion left him in amazement,—with which word, as all the idle readers of matrimony too well know, the salutary lecture ends.

He stood like a statue, unconscious of what was going on; and when the rest of the party retired to the vestry, he lingered in the church, hoping to see the lovely vision again; but he

was disappointed, although his mind was freshly agitated by seeing his father do precisely what he himself was doing—he saw *him* evidently looking for somebody; and what added to his conviction that the young lady was there by his father's desire, and with his concurrence, was the fact, that the old gentleman, in his search, crossed from where he had been standing during the ceremony, directly to the pillar where she had so ill concealed herself, and even walked down that aisle, evidently in search of her.

In fact, this put an end to all doubt on Edward's part, and he resolved, the moment his sister and her husband were on the road to Brighton, to commence a series of operations, by which he should perhaps discover the girl; and if that failed, he determined to open his heart to his father himself, and take the consequences, for he found the struggle not only between love and duty, but between duty and disrespect, so strong, that he could endure it no longer.

In the middle of his very unpleasant reflections on the subject, he literally shuddered, when his father, coming up to him, put his arm through his, and expressed his satisfaction at *the event* of the morning, and added to Edward,

that during the absence of the Appertons at Brighton, until he joined them there, he, Ned, must spare him more of his time at home than he had latterly done; for, said he, "when my Kate is away, Ned, who have I to console or cheer me but *you?*" Why, thought Ned, one of the prettiest creatures in England; and the thought was so predominant, that he as nearly as possible had taken that very opportunity of divulging the secret knowledge of his parent's intimacy with the fair lady, which he possessed; but he checked himself for the moment, and reserved the *denouement* for a period when the old gentleman could better afford him time and attention to listen to it.

All the necessary forms to complete the union of the Appertons having been gone through, the party returned through the same fog, and mist, and wet, which had covered the procession with dinginess, to Burlington Gardens, where, what, if it had been advertized in the Newspapers by people of higher rank, would have been called a Dejeuné a la fourchette, was ready prepared, in which art vied with nature in the production of all the delicacies of the season, with which the tables *literally* groaned. However, as Gunter had no share in

the proceedings, and Maxwell had no servants sufficiently interested in his private proceedings to make an article of it for the newspapers, I shall take the liberty of saying, that they found a remarkably comfortable breakfast on their return, and that although Katharine did not herself partake of it, (seeing that she retired to divest herself of her wedding dress, and habit herself more suitably to the time of day, the season of the year, and the journey she was about to take;) all the other characters of the drama performed their several parts with wonderful activity and judgment, and amongst them, who strove more than Godfrey Moss and the convivial Vicar of Fudley cum Pipes?

After sundry attacks upon fowls, tongues, hams, prawns, marmelades, eggs, thin salutary slices of broiled bacon, tea, coffee, and cocoa, Apperton proceeded, like his bride, to asssume a costume better calculated for travelling than that in which he was married; and just as he made his appearance, booted and great-coated, (all new,) the King Street Bazaar carriage drove up to the door—brides may mourn, when I say there were but a pair of posters and no favours! This last omission, however, was at Katharine's earnest desire; indeed the absence

of *eclat* in any part of the affair was studied and premeditated, since it appeared, both to Apperton and his wife, that nothing could possibly be more disagreeable than giving notoriety to the novelty of their situation to every passing stranger.

Kate at length re-appeared amongst her friends. She was as calm and placid as if it was Miss O'Conochie's wedding they were celebrating instead of her own. When at length the carriage was pronounced ready, she wept some tears as her father led her towards it—but her grief was transient, since she knew she should soon be joined by her family.

Separations themselves are hateful things, descriptions of them therefore must be hateful too—so shut the door;—they are gone—the bride's-maids are inquiring for their shawls and "things," the Mosses getting fidgety—Maxwell is particularly anxious to go out in his carriage, and Edward still more anxious to discover Mrs. Randolph—for such, in his own mind, he had now determined his beauty to be—wife to the Captain of the Whilelmina, and in this state of things the party separated; but, as far as related to Edward and the two Mosses, only to meet again at dinner at six o'clock at Maxwell's.

When all the whirl and worry of the ceremony were over, there seemed a new and universal dulness spread through Maxwell's house. Edward went into the drawing-rooms; the piano forte was closely shut up, the furniture was all set in order, every chair was in its place, without the slightest appearance of comfort or use. Kate's work-table, which stood in one of the windows, was locked, and her own writing-table, which used to be covered with notes, and scraps, and albums, and all sorts of nonsense, was now formally set out with the inkstand in the middle, and the paper, and the paper-knife, and the wax, and the blotting-paper, all in a regular display,—he almost thought he heard his sister's voice, and he walked and wandered about the rooms with a feeling of indiscribable unhappiness: he almost began to wish that Mrs. Epsworth had stayed for the wedding, and stayed in town afterwards; but the old lady, whose conscience, I suppose, smote her occasionally, did not seem to think that remaining the constant and sole companion of the younger Maxwell, who had lost her daughter, and the elder Maxwell, who appeared never to forget that he had lost her fortune, would be perfectly agreeable, and accordingly betook

herself to her home, where, the centre of a small circle of her own, she had the power of extorting something like respect, even if she failed to obtain the affection of her neighbours.

Edward, as it was, found home unbearable; and having established in his mind the certainty of his success in pursuing the captain's wife to Bermondsey, started forthwith in the direction of that outskirt of the metropolis, calculating that great expedition was not absolutely necessary since it would require some time for the fair object of his inquiry to regain her home, after having so strangely witnessed the ceremony of his sister's marriage in the parish church of Saint James, Westminster.

How soon a knot of intimate friends, in these days of steam and expeditious travelling, are scattered and spread like globules of quicksilver under the pressure of the finger! Three or four days ago, Maxwell's house was the receptacle of a nest of relations, brought together, it must be confessed, under somewhat extraordinary circumstances—to day, how separated! The volatile major, and his happy wife, were on the continent—Kate, and her any thing but volatile husband, were half way to Brighton—Mrs. Epsworth was concocting a snug

tea and card party for her neighbours—the Mosses, who were before absent, had now returned to London—Edward was on his way to Bermondsey—and Edward's father was on his way to visit his patients.

The explorations of Captain Parry towards the North Pole have met with high eulogy and honourable reward. The great Cook, though more successful in his outset, was more unfortunate in the termination of his discoveries. Columbus stands immortalized by his deeds—Vancouver, Raleigh, Drake, all are high-sounding names; but Edward emulating all their enterprizes, and transcending all their toils, explored and succeeded in discovering the residence of Captain Randolph of the Whilelmina, in the Grange Road, Bermondsey, at which destination he arrived before three, P. M. on the day of his departure from London.

He collected his information respecting the captain's dwelling from sundry small boys bearing beer pots in wooden cases, after the fashion of those parts; and of certain of the natives habituated to the making and selling of bread, until, by comparing notes, and putting "that, and that together," as they say, he found himself in front of a small smart house,

before which, within green rails, was laid out a neat "fore court," a circular box-bound bed stood in the centre of the gravel, and a white pipe-clayed stony path led to the door, to which the ascent was by four steep steps.

In one of the drawing room windows, (for there were two) stood a cage, containing a green Cockatoo. In the parlour window (for there was but one) stood on a small table another cage, containing a blue cockatoo; in the kitchen window, which opened into the area, stood a huge perch, on which roosted a grey parrot of much larger growth than either of the others. As Edward, "beer directed," ascended the steps, he perceived exactly in the centre of the door, a brass plate engraved with the desired word, RANDOLPH, in capital letters of large dimensions.

Thus satisfied, the youthful traveller knocked; nobody appeared, but he heard through the flimsy partition of the pannels, a hurry and scuffling, indicative of "putting things away," and, after a little delay, a maid-servant in black opened the door, and forthwith the house gave out a powerful smell of cockatoos and onions.

"Is Mrs. Randolph at home?" said Edward.

"Missis is at home, sir," said the maid; "but

she ant, by no means, what you would call well. sir—what's your business, sir?"

Why," said Edward, who was not a little puzzled at the question; " I—I only wished to speak to her."

" Please tell me your name, sir," said the servant.

" Mrs. Randolph doesn't know my name," replied Edward.

" Show the gemman up into the first floor," said a voice from below, which, if it were not that of the great grey parrot in the kitchen window, sounded very like it.

" This way, sir," said the maid, who gradually softened in her manner towards Edward, as she found her mistress inclined to admit his visit.

And accordingly Edward followed her up a carpeted ladder, railed on the side, and called a flight of stairs; in two moderate strides he reached the front drawing-room, where he was left for a few minutes to contemplate the surrounding objects.

Over the chimney-piece was a looking-glass, which produced upon any thing reflected by it a similar effect to that which is obtained by looking at one's face in a spoon; it had a row of gilt nobs round it, and a figure of Brittania, sur-

rounded by bales, shot, and anchors, on the top of the frame. Two pasteboard chimney sweepers, their bags forming what are called "spill cases," and two painted wine glasses filled with sand, constituted the remaining ornaments of the "mantel-shelf," and were flanked by two squat black iron candlesticks, hung round with glass drops. In the very centre appeared a watch, which did not go, placed in a marble case, with little columns on its sides, and a little hole in its middle for the dial to come through; added to these, was 'pretty cocky' in the window, as before noticed.

A brown japanned tea-urn reposed on a painted wooden slab, in a recess on one side of the fireplace, resting on a scarlet and green rug of Mrs. Randolph's own workmanship; and, on what she would have called the wooden slab, "to answer," in the other recess, stood a large glass beaker, with a snaked stem, imported by her loving spouse at some former time from Holland, surrounded by divers glasses and tumblers, amongst which lay Captain Randolph's own peculiar punch-ladle with a whalebone handle, and a Queen Ann's guinea at the bottom of the bowl. In two of the largest tumblers were stuck the eggs of ostriches, and under each slab was placed a china jar some two feet high.

The walls of the apartment, besides the looking glass, were adorned with a portrait of Lord Nelson, two prints of sea fights, and a view of Macao. The pictures of two persons, painted in oil, were pendant amongst the prints, one, as it might naturally be supposed, being the effigies of Captain Randolph, the other the likeness of a woman of the broadest possible dimensions, with the bluest eyes, the brownest hair, and the reddest cheeks that picture ever had: human beings never possessed any thing like them; but the sight of them was death to Edward, who saw in the likenesses a "sign" of his approaching mortification and disappointment. Of course the lady must be Mrs. Randolph; and here was he penned up in the drawing-room of the house, to be received by the dame whose resemblance he already saw before him, and, having been received, to make his way out again, as well as he possibly could.

But then the lovely girl might be the daughter—who could tell? Time, the "edax rerum," which levels all things, alone could decide; and, to say truth, old Chronos, in the present instance, was not very long about his work, for in less than three minutes the drawing-room door opened, and presented to the eyes of the

embarrassed Edward, a human being who bore exactly the same resemblance to the picture on the wall, as monsters at fairs do to the shew-cloths which are exhibited as tempters on the outsides of booths and caravans.

"What's your pleasure, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph, whose roseate cheeks, contrasted with her sable garments, gave her a "rouge et noir" appearance quite terrific; not to speak of the predominant flavour of onions, which it should seem she had herself been frying as an agreeable addition to her beefsteaks.

"Why, madam," said Maxwell, "I—I really only wanted to ask a question."

"Well, sir, out with it at once, and no offence neither," said the lady.

"Captain Randolph, I believe, commands the Whilelmina?" said Edward.

"Yes, sir,—the Vilelmeeny," said Mrs. Randolph, "and igh time it is he shoud; he's been now a sailor, man and boy, these six and twenty years, sir; and it arn't afore he shud be that he's got to be cappun."

"I am quite sure of his merits, madam," said Edward—who really didn't know exactly what to say.

"Why, as to his merrits, ye see, sir," said

the lady, "there's them as has got gumtion and them as arn't; and my old man, I *will* say it for him, knows what's what, as well as is neighburs; but its hup ill work, them there sea affairs is, if ye harn't got nothing to begin with; and many a night I have laid and eared the vind a vistling down my bed-room chimly in the vinter, when my poor Bill has been a vorking avay on the salt seas; but it's not of no kind of use a fretten, sir, and now is turn's com'd, you see, to be cappun, and the Villelemey is part is hone; he's part properioter of her, sir; and so if it's about ship business you are come, perhaps I can give you a hanser."

"Captain Randolph has sailed I—" said Edward, inquiringly.

"From the river," said the lady; "but I expects to hear from him at Portsmouth, and p'raps Plymouth, afore his reglarly off, you know."

"My question," said Edward, "merely related to his passengers; indeed, I thought—I am sure you will forgive me—I understood that you were going with him on the voyage."

"Not I, sir," said Mrs. Randolph; "no—no—one's enough to go skimbling skambling all over the world: who'd take care of our bits of

things if it wan't for me? there's my poor birds, why, la, I vallies em just like human creturs—feeds 'em every day myself, and when they die, bless their pretty innocent arts, I gets a neighbur of mine to stuff em and put em in glass cases, where they look as nat'ral as life, and costs nothing for eating; no—I harn't a turn for the sea, sir; besides it an't a nice place for women, as I thinks."

"You have no family, I presume, ma'am," said Edward.

"And why so, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph; "is it because I'm fond of dumb hannymals you think that? I begs your pardon, I have a darter, as nice a gal as ever you clapped your two eyes upon."

"Does she visit the Whilelmina sometimes, when she is in the river?" said Edward, who could not help admiring the good nature with which the mistress of the house answered his questions.

"To be sure she does," said the mother; "but why d'ye want to know so much about my darter, sir?"

"I repeat, madam," said Edward, "that I have a thousand apologies to make, but I will be very candid with you. I have seen a young

lady with whom I am most anxious to have five minutes conversation; I have reason to think she is related to your family, or to Captain Randolph; and now that you tell me the Whilelmina is yet at one of the outports, I really believe that the young lady in question is somehow connected with the ship, and—"

"Oh! la! sir," said the good-humoured lady, "if ye want to see my darter you shall see her, in the shaking out of a reef. She's no reason to be ashamed to show her face, and if it's any law question, as I suspect it is, and you are come here to pump me about my old man, why, knowing as I do that his character's as clear as christial, I'll help you to sift it to the bottom: we fear nobody—not we."

"My dear ma'am," said Edward, "I assure you I—"

"Oh, you shall see her," said Mrs. Randolph; and, putting her head over the ballustrades, she called to Martha, the maid, to send up Miss Caroline. "No, sir," continued the lady, returning to the charge, "we are all fair and above board in this house; you shall see my gal in welcome."

This was the last hope; it might even now be the phantom embodied at Bermondsey. After a

few minutes' delay, he heard a heavyish step stumping up the little staircase, and the door opening, presented to his eyes an exceedingly broad, squat girl of about fifteen, in a black frock, with a well fitting Holland pinafore, very bright eyes, very black hair, a snub nose, and a laughing, good-humoured countenance.

"Want me, ma?" said Caroline.

"No, Cary, not particler; it is only for this here gemman to look at you, my dear," said Mrs. Randolph.

Caroline blushed up to the eyes, and all over as much of her neck as was visible.

"I really have so very much to apologize," said Maxwell; "you have quite mistaken my object: I merely thought that a young lady who was on board Captain Randolph's ship the other evening, might have been part of your family, and I was anxious to have said a few words to her."

"Young lady aboard my husband's ship!" said Mrs. Randolph, whose cheeks began to be more crimson than ever; "go down stairs, my dear Caroline; you have passed muster on deck, as your pa says—go below."

Caroline accordingly went, but not with the same sort of alacrity she had discovered in as-

cending. "Now, Sir," said the matron, evidently getting into a passion, "what is it you want here? If you have any questions to ax, as I have said afore, I am ready and willing to answer them; I have told you, I 'spose, what you wanted to know, and now what else is it?"

"Why—can you inform me, madam," said Edward, "what passengers go with Captain Randolph this voyage—and where they are going to?"

"I can answer that in an uncommon short space of time," said Mrs. Randolph, "for he has not no passengers whatsumever."

"Then, madam, you have told me all I wanted to learn," said Ned; "and again I must beg you to excuse the great liberty I have taken, and to accept my best thanks for your kindness."

"Oh, as to the matter o' that," replied the lady, "there's no great kindness in answering when you are axed; I'm bound to be civil to every body as comes upon my husband's business, as I thought you did; howsumever, it seems as how you come on your own."

Edward felt he had no business there at all.

"I wish you a very good morning, ma'am," said Maxwell.

"Good day, sir," replied Mrs. Randolph; "here, Martha—shew this here gemman out."

These last words were spoken with an emphasis not to be misunderstood. It conveyed, "Mind he does not take any thing with him;" and accordingly, down went Ned, and glad enough he was, when he found himself at the bottom of the pipe-clay steps, and well out of the house, although he had taken nothing by his motion. On casting his eyes towards the parlour window, he found that the cockatoo of that station had been removed, and that young pinafore had taken the bird's place—whether the better to watch his departure, or exhibit her own pretty little plump person, Ned did not stop to consider.

This expedition, however, and its failure, produced a very powerful effect upon Edward's mind; and having a somewhat long walk before him, he threw together all the circumstances of the case, and felt resolved to delay no longer opening his heart to his father.

The deep impression the girl had made upon him, rooted as it even then seemed to be, might, perhaps, be extirpated (not that he saw the probability); and he would at all events have felt bound to stifle it, until he could ascertain enough

of her station and character, to justify a serious appeal to the old gentleman; but the combined circumstances of seeing his parent in earnest and confidential communication with this very individual, during a meeting, purposely planned, and for which she had been waiting in a common highway of milliners' assignations; and her presence at his sister's wedding, which could not have been accidental, the earnestness and fervour with which she joined in the service, not generally interesting to young ladies who are not principal performers in the ceremony; all so clearly proved the existence of some tie between them, beyond that which had accidentally (and so marvellously, as it should seem) connected them, that Edward decided if he were left *tête à tête* with his father, that very day, after dinner, he would at once put an end to a doubt, and mystery, which while they greatly detracted from his filial respect, continued to put a restraint upon his conversation when directed to old Maxwell, which he could no longer patiently endure.

The fates seemed to favour his design of inducing the *denouément;* for after the very dullest of dinners had ended, he discovered that Moss and his brother had accepted seats in a

private box at Drury Lane Theatre, which circumstance would most agreeably and conveniently leave him and his parent alone.

How many times have men, during their lives, wished for an opportunity to achieve some end, to carry some point, and yet, when it arrived, felt that the difficulty of breaking the ice was too great to be attempted. There is somewhere extant, an old song, illustrative of this unpleasant timidity in a lover, which fortunately I do not recollect, for it is so very apposite, that if I had remembered it, I must have quoted it, and altogether I am inclined to believe that it is not quite correct; leaving, therefore, the difficulties of love out of the question, let us present to view the two Maxwells alone, for the first time after the younger one had made the discovery to the disadvantage of the elder one; the Mosses having retired, and left the field open for the conflict.

A silence of some length succeeded the departure of the eccentric brothers; the younger Maxwell took the poker and stirred the fire, and broke, with infinite skill and considerable assiduity, a large coal, which surmounted all its sable brethren of Lambton's main, in the grate.

"It's rather cold to night, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Yes, sir," said Edward, looking at the fire, and seeing amidst its flickering brilliancy, the Green Park—the meeting—St. James's church—the vision behind the column—Captain Randolph's house—fat Caroline in the pinafore—Mrs. Randolph and the three cockatoos.

"Where have you been this morning," said the elder Maxwell, "walking or riding?"

"Walking, sir," said Ned—giving the fire another digging sort of poke.

"I have been to Hendon," said the elder Maxwell, "to see a poor fellow who is suffering dreadfully, and there I was kept till I came home to dinner; I must go there again in the morning—a hunting fall merely—but the consequences are extremely serious."

"I have been as far as Bermondsey to-day," said Edward.

"Bermondsey!" echoed the elder Maxwell—"what could have taken you to Bermondsey?"

"Curiosity, sir," said Edward; "I had an object."

"A search after your fair phantom, Ned?" said the father.

"Exactly so, sir," replied the son.

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"That's a search I would recommend you to give up," said Maxwell, filling his glass, and putting the bottle to Edward. "Such a person as you describe that young woman to be—I mean, a young woman walking alone, without either protector or servant, and in a part of the town where ladies are not in the habit of walking the streets as amateurs, can come to no good; and you might, perhaps, entangle yourself in some connexion, which would be highly injurious, either to your respectability in forming it, or to your happiness in abandoning it."

"I have seen the young lady twice, sir, since I mentioned her to you," said Edward, looking firmly at his father—his hands growing as cold as ice, his throat parched, and his cheeks burning.

"Oh, I suppose," said his father, "you didn't choose to communicate, for fear of Moss's raillery."

"No, sir," said Edward, "I had other—better motives."

"How d'ye mean? Ned—you look agitated," said Maxwell; "what's the meaning of this?"

"My heart is very full, sir," said Edward; "I am placed in a situation the most painful—

I—I cannot bear to say what I know—but I know something that I feel I ought not to conceal from you."

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Maxwell, "has Katharine told you any thing?"

"What, sir?" said Edward, alarmed at his father's earnestness.

"Answer me *that*, Edward," said his father, pale and trembling, "in an instant—has your sister—has *my* daughter, Kate, told you what she—but stop—stop—I know she has not—she could not. What d'ye mean you *know?*—Speak—you have never had concealment from me on any important point, nor I from my family."

"If I were sure of that," said Edward, "I should be too happy."

"To what do you refer?" asked Maxwell, still violently affected with a mixed feeling of doubt and alarm—"nothing relative to Kate—nothing that she has told you?"

"On the contrary, sir," said Edward, "she knows nothing of it, nor would I that she should for the world."

"Explain, then," said Maxwell, recovering with this announcement all his wonted presence of mind; "explain, then, what you *do* mean?"

"It is most difficult—most painful," said Edward; "but I am sure, for all our sakes, it is best I should be explicit."

"To what does it relate?" said Maxwell.

"To the young creature, whose beauty and manners have so seriously affected my happiness," said Edward.

"Bravo!" said Maxwell, filling his glass to the brim, as if millions of pounds of care and anxiety were taken from his heart at the moment —"here's to her health, Ned, be she whom she may."

"Oh! father," said Edward, "the moment is come—you and I cannot—must not drink to that being's health, whoever she may be, together. It is against the laws of society—perhaps, of heaven!"

"How!" exclaimed Maxwell, "are you mad, Ned?"

"No, no, sir," exclaimed Edward, "I trust not—but I have seen her so situated—so placed —nay, this very day I beheld her"——

At this moment the dinner-parlour door was thrown open, and exhibited the two Mosses returned from the play, whence, finding that, in consequence of a violent cold, Mr. Kean could not perform, they had beaten a rapid retreat,

without even leaving the carriage, and were now returned to enjoy a snug, sociable evening, make a party at whist with Maxwell and his son, and wind up the night with some roasted oysters and a jorum of punch, to the health and happiness of the bride and bridegroom at Brighton.

CHAPTER II.

" Through storms and tempests so the sailor drives,
Whilst every element in combat strives ;
Loud roars the thunder, fierce the lightning flies,
Winds wildly rage, and billows tear the skies,
Safe through the war her course the vessel steers,
The haven gained, the pilot drops his fears,
Thence smiling, he to smoother scenes looks on,
And thinks no more of dangers past and gone.

SHIRLEY."

THERE were certain of the ancients, who, for a month after marriage, lived upon mead—hence the honeymoon. Lord Byron has improved upon this, and calls his first month of connubial *bliss* the "treacle moon." Certain it is, that all persons below the rank of sovereign princes are left to themselves during the eight-and-twenty days immediately succeeding the nuptial ceremony. Crowned heads are not so particular; a king is married on Wednesday—shows himself and his consort in public on the Thursday—perhaps attends a theatrical representation on the Friday, and goes in state to church the following Sunday, as if he had been a Benedick half his life.

What the customs ordinarily observed with the race of stockbrokers upon such occasions may be, I cannot take upon myself to say; but whatever is the general rule, touching their temporary seclusion, it must be broken in upon as far as Apperton and his bride are concerned; for painful as it may be to the reader to be cut short of a very important explanation, by the inopportune arrival of the Tarantula brothers, it is absolutely necessary that I should waft him to Brighton faster than Goodman in his Times, with all his speed and security, could convey him.

On the morning succeeding the wedding-day, Apperton (whose plans and pursuits appeared not in the slightest degree changed by the great alteration which had taken place in his circumstances) proceeded, under the direction of the mistress of the house which they had taken, first to the market to cheapen fish, and then to the post office, to inquire for his letters. In the former business, considering it was his *debût* in Brighton bartering, he was more successful than in the latter; for although he bitterly complained to Mrs. Gunn that brills and skate "looked up," he found, by intelligence from London, that certain shares and foreign se-

curities, as they were unaptly called, were looking down. The "postscriptum" of one of his correspondent's letters hinted at the suspected frailty of a well-known city firm, and at several other matters, ill-suited to the day on which they were received.

His aspect and manner when he returned to breakfast were any thing but joyous; and with such a treasure as Katharine in his possession it was clear that he had some other treasure to which his heart was more powerfully allied. It was, it must be owned, rather disappointing to Mrs. Apperton to hear her spouse dividing the breakfast hour between bitterly abusing the cook for spoiling the whitings, and summing up little rows of figures with the greatest solicitude; nay, she was sufficiently a judge of countenances, to see that her dearly beloved would have given the world, if decency had permitted it, to put himself into one of the stages, and start for London that very morning.

Such is the influence of the demon Avarice, such the overwhelming power of gambling, when once it has gained possession of the mind,—for gambling Apperton's decidedly was, without even the excuse of temporary excitement, or

personal participation in the actual progress of his system; all his success or failure depended upon events over which he himself had no controul, and the course of which he could only guess at. To be sure, a stockbroker has one advantage over every other gamester—he gambles while he is asleep as well as when he is awake; the great game goes on night and day; and it should seem, by Apperton's appearance on the present occasion, that the throws of the preceding morning had been very much against him.

It was impossible for Katharine not to feel how completely she had become the secondary object of his attention since the arrival of his letters; and to relieve a sort of aching pain at her heart, which she would rather have died than acknowledge, she turned to the window, whence she could behold the fine combination of sea and sunshine, which, even in the depth of winter or early spring, gives to treeless Brighton all the splendour and brilliancy of a summer's day.

It is seldom, (and before the packet-boats to Dieppe were established there, it was still more seldom,) that the view from Brighton is enlivened by the appearance of vessels larger than her own fishing-boats, or mayhap a collier brig, whose

venturous master drives her to the end of West Street to unload her useful cargo, at the hazard of his craft; but occasionally the sameness is relieved, and accident gives the walkers and watchers a treat, in the shape of some large outward or homeward-bound ship, thrown within the range of the well-levelled telescopes on the cliffs, or the beach.

This lucky chance turned up to-day, and Katharine exclaimed, with a sort of enthusiasm quite incomprehensible to her husband,—

"Look—look—Apperton, what a large ship there is in the distance!"

"Dear me, Kate," said Apperton, "you frightened me—I thought you had seen something terrible. Is there any thing very wonderful in seeing a ship on the sea?"

"Why *here*," said Kate, chilled to the heart by the manner in which she had been checked by her husband; "here they do *not* so often see ships—I only mentioned it on that account; besides, nothing can be more beautiful, as an object, than a large vessel under sail."

"I've no taste for ships," said Apperton; "what day did your father propose coming down to us?"

"Monday, I think," said Mrs. Apperton.

"I should like very much to see him," said Apperton; "you would not mind my writing to ask him to come down to us to-morrow."

"Me! no," said Kate—too truly; "I am always happier in my father's society than out of it."

"Then I'll tell him so," said Apperton; "what, is *that* the ship you were talking of—La! I see nothing so very beautiful about *her*."

"Her distance from us renders her not sufficiently distinct," said Katharine.

"See—d'ye see that smoke?" said Apperton.

"A gun," said Katharine; "she wants a pilot, I suppose."

"Upon my word," said Apperton, "you might be taken for one of the old bathing-women here, you seem to know so much about all these matters,—I should not think she could want a pilot now."

"I don't see why she should not," said Katharine; "the dangers and difficulties of channel navigation are infinitely greater hence to the River Thames than any where else; and you may rely upon it, if she have no pilot yet, she will not proceed without one—but she seems rapidly approaching the land."

"Well come, let's go and see and hear all

about it," said Apperton—"pop on your 'things,' and w'ell walk down to this new-fangled pier, and find out what it all means.—There goes another gun."

Kate, who seemed to dread inaction, and sought, even in the little bustle of these uninteresting inquiries, a relief from the sameness of *home*—early days for such a feeling—was quite charmed with the proposal, and hurrying on her "things," as her husband called them, was ready in five minutes to take his proffered arm in the walk. The excitement of the arrival had spread, and numbers of people were flocking towards the chain-pier, which Apperton pronounced the only spot to see the fun, in which opinion Kate entirely coincided—he at that period not being aware, since he had never yet danced on its wires, that a small sum would be demanded, by way of toll, for his exhibition thereon.

It was curious to see the little struggle between pride and decorum, and ease, and economy, while he exchanged a sixpence for the purpose of obtaining admission for himself and his wife. There was no hesitation as to the disbursement; but when he had lodged the balance, as he would have called it, in his coat-

pocket, he could not stifle an expression of his belief, that the chain-pier must be a very good speculation, and of a wish that he had bought some shares in it when they were offered to him.

To have seen this bride and bridegroom pass along the esplanade, on to the swinging floor of the picturesque toy, which has done more towards improving the appearance of dear ugly Brighton, than any thing that has happened to it since its foundation, any body would have set them down for a long-married couple, and naturally have cast an eye behind for a groupe of nursery maids, and little "eyasses" under their care. Kate felt the influence of the sun and the sea breeze, and the exercise, and the general gaiety that surrounded her, and was quite in spirits; and her husband, to whom nautical matters were novelties, abstracted his thoughts for the moment from Change Alley and Threadneedle Street, and felt temporarily interested in the spectacle.

"What is the ship?" said Apperton to one of the boatmen, who was in attendance in hopes of a job.

"She's a Hingyman, sir," said the fellow.

"A Hingyman!" repeated Apperton. "Ah!"

"I suppose," said the man, "she didn't like

coming through the Needles last night, and so com'd round outside by the back o' the Isle o' Wight, and made the land somewheres here about this morning. She'll send her purser ashore here, I dare say, sir, with the despatches, and mayhap some of the passengers."

Apperton's mind was instantly at work upon this information, in order to ascertain whether any early intelligence could be gathered from any of the people who landed, by which he might be able to make a hit in the market; but he was suddenly attracted from the dream of activity into which he had fallen, by recollecting that he had a wife, whom he could not decently quit at the moment, even though the riches of Golconda presented themselves to his view at the end of Leadenhall Street.

Meanwhile the platform at the pier-head became crowded; and Apperton, anxious to indulge himself with a peep at the "Hingyman," applied his eye to a glass which was most civilly offered him by a very respectable old man, and, having satisfied himself, was forthwith relieved of the odd twopenny worth of balance in his coat-pocket. Again he stifled his resentment and mortification, and only murmured, "Dear

peep, however," and drew away his lady, lest she should be seized with a desire of inspecting the vessel more minutely.

" That must be a profitable glass to that poor man," said Apperton. " Curious propensities people have—by waiting half an hour, they could see this ship as perfectly for nothing, as they now do by paying for it; however, live and let live: it is an innocent way of making money, at all events."

Apperton, however, was not quite correct in his calculations on this point; the result did not by any means justify his anticipations; suddenly the sails of the "Hingyman" were all aback, and a large shore-boat, which had gone off to her an hour before, was observed alongside rapidly filling with passengers, who were seen dropping into it from her sides. In a few minutes the " Hingyman" filled again, and with a wind almost right aft, and yards nearly square, began bowling along on her way to Blackwall, leaving the boat, like a black speck upon the face of the water, behind her.

Upon this little tossing object all eyes were now fixed; and, after nearly another hour's suspense, she neared the shore. The crowds of sight-hunters had so thronged the railings at the pier-

head, that Apperton and his lady had no chance of seeing the boat, or indeed what was landed from it; and as a *genteel* crowd is uniformly the most boisterous that can possibly be imagined, they withdrew their slender claims, and satisfied themselves with a sidelong glance at the newly arrived voyagers. The first who passed them was, as the barrowman anticipated, the purser, followed by two men conveying huge boxes of letters and despatches. To him, succeeded an elderly gentleman, cheeks yellow, hair grey, and a pigtail fluttering in the breeze; wearing green spectacles, and a white hat, a great coat, nankeen pantaloons and gaiters, and carrying an umbrella: he was accompanied by a kitmagar in full costume, whose muslin shivered in the wind, and who chattered, like a parrot, a compound of all the languages of the East; then succeeded the two master Mackkirkincrofts and their three sisters, with two or three ayahs, and a European servant, who appeared to devote his especial attention to Mrs. Mackirkincroft herself, evidently an invalid, and mother of the small brood of Mackirkincrofts now fresh imported.

At this period of the procession, one of the Brighton boatmen hailed a boy, who had just jumped ashore, and bid him go and get a fly

for a gentleman in the boat. This to Apperton's unaccustomed ear sounded oddly; fly catching, at that season, puzzled him, and his wonder was not decreased when he heard an additional direction given to the lad not to bring a horse fly.

Kate saw the astonishment of her innocent husband, and forthwith proceeded to enlighten him; and by her explanation of the fact, that the hireable carriages at Brighton, and now at all watering places, are called "flies," not only relieved him from a strange mystification at the moment, but cleared up a doubt which had arisen in his mind in the morning, as to certain words painted on the railing, near the cliff, which ran thus: "Not more than three flies to stand here." This had been a pozer to him before breakfast; he could not at all comprehend it; but was yet too proud to endeavour to ascertain why there should not be sufficient room in Brighton for people and flies too; or why they should be so very particular as to the number of those little animals permitted to rest themselves in any one particular place.

The motley groupe of voyagers, amounting altogether to ten, I think, had reached the gates of the esplanade, whither the Appertons had fol-

lowed them, before the arrival of the fly, which was destined to convey another of them from the pier. At length it came, and the pure spirit of curiosity prompted the newly married couple to see the magnificent nabob, who would not condescend to touch the earth with the sole of his foot, even though it were the free soil of Britain. However, the fly penetrated through the crowd, where they did not care to follow; so, on their return homewards, they permitted the important *qui hi* to pass them in his little vehicle. Any hope of a glimpse at his supereminence, however, was vain; the glasses were up, and the blinds down, so that, if the governor-general himself had landed, there could not have been much greater fuss about his being exhibited. Apperton and his wife, however, were followed in the course of the throng by two of the boatmen carrying baggage, and a European servant belonging to the great invisible.

"Your master seems pretty baddish," said one of the boatmen.

"I believe you," said the man; "I never expected he'd see England no more; howsumever, he's a vast sight better now than he was, and right glad he was to get ashore the first place as ever he could; it's his temper as has saved his

life; he's the best-temperdest cretur as ever trod shoe leather."

The Appertons, quite contented with having heard this candid and satisfactory eulogium upon the invalid in the little coach; and not feeling particularly disposed to hear more of the details of his illness, or his virtues, made way on the *trottoir* for the persons who were descanting on them. The servant carried a dressing-case, and a pistol-case, and a carpet-bag; one of the boatmen carried a huge Indian basket full of linen, and another bag; and the other boatman a trunk, which appeared almost too heavy for his strength, to which was affixed a card, whereon was written the name of its proper owner.

Apperton, whose curiosity was very easily excited, stepped in advance of his wife two or three paces, and then turning to her with an expression of the most rapturous delight at having discovered what, in point of fact, did not appear likely to be the least interesting to him or her, said, "I have found out the name of the important personage."

"Have you?" said Kate, still looking towards the lessening ship, which was ploughing the waves; "and is he a prince in disguise?"

" No, said Apperton; " a plain officer in the army—Captain Somerford, of some regiment, I forget the number; 'passenger' is what is on the card."

" Somerford!" said Kate; not daring to take her eyes from the ship, which, if it before attracted her attention, had now become a thousand times more interesting—" Somerford!—good God—how very strange." These were the only words that escaped her lips, but she felt at the moment as if she were petrified: no effort—no exertion could move her from the spot on which she stood. She grasped the coping of the wall to save herself from sinking on the pavement—to have stirred, would have been to fall.

" Come Kate, let us walk down once again," said Apperton, on the principle of having his two-pennyworth of promenade for his twopence.

Her head grew dizzy: the dread of tears, which would have relieved her—the impossibility of answering Apperton—the consciousness that the mere effort to speak would betray her, all overwhelmed her—she stood and trembled, and gasped for breath—to have seen, perhaps to have been seen, by Somerford—the only being on earth she loved—as the bride of Apperton—

to confess she knew him—to acknowledge even the name, which, during all her husband's intimacy with her family, he had never heard mentioned—how to account for her trepidation, if asked about it—could she deceive so early the man she had married, and on such a point?

It was impossible her agitation should escape the notice even of Apperton, not ordinarily the most sensitive or quick-sighted person, especially where ladies were concerned.

"Are you ill, Kate?" said he.

"Yes," replied Kate; a sudden giddiness and sickness—I—

"'Tis the sea," said the unsuspecting husband: "the glare, and the noise, and perhaps the salt, and perhaps the sight of the sick man; —you'll be better presently—try to walk a little."

Kate was thankful for the considerate choice of causes which Apperton had named, whence to select the origin of her malady, and admitted that she thought it *was* the glare of the sun upon the water, and that she *should* be better if they walked towards the Steyne, or the parade, away from its influence; she, the good, the excellent, the amiable, high-principled Kate, not losing sight, in this proposition, of the probabi-

lity of again seeing the vehicle which bore Charles Somerford, and of ascertaining, perhaps, in what direction he was going.

In this desire there mingled no feeling of which a vestal could disapprove; it was a solicitude for one who had been dearer to her than herself; the knowledge that he was near her, alive too, after the positive reports she had received of his death, revived ten thousand feelings in her heart, which she had promised herself never again should agitate her; yet now that she was married—that the hope of ever being Charles's was at an end, she felt that she should be happier if she knew all the particulars of his illness and his recovery—the place where he dwelt, and the care under which he was placed. She felt, in short, the affection of a sister for him, and only regretted that the long concealment of his name had rendered it impossible to admit her intimate knowledge of him to her husband, without subjecting herself to a chain of endless inquiries, which, if she candidly replied to them, would unsettle the mind of her husband, and perhaps entail upon herself and her father, a charge of concealment and duplicity

In the midst, however, of such a conflict of

feeling, it may easily be imagined that Kate did not find herself very much soothed or tranquillized by perceiving, that the house to which the boatman had recommended Somerford, as his residence, adjoined that which she and her husband occupied, and that the fly, relieved of its precious burthen, was actually standing at the door, while its late inhabitant examined the apartments, and decided whether he should take them or not.

Amongst all the combinations which appeared in progress for the discomfiture of Kate, and the derangement of the happiness of the honeymoon, this seemed the climax. Seeing Somerford, was like an electric shock, but she had recovered from its startling effect; lodging him next door, with only a Brighton wall between them, was like putting on a perpetual blister—(she thought technically)—and she felt, that when her father and brother joined them, it would be quite impossible to remain such near neighbours without a *denouément*, more especially as the houses they inhabited were graced with the once fashionable Brighton bay windows, which on either side commanded a view of a great portion of the adjoining drawing-rooms.

"By Job!" said Apperton—who always so

called the mighty King of the Gods; "but I say, Kate, the Nabob's gone next door to us."

"So I see," said Kate.

"Shows ours is a fashionable part of the town; the grandees come amongst us," said the stockbroker.

The idea of the poor exiled Somerford being thus suddenly metamorphosed into a grandee, almost made the bride smile.

"I suspect he is too unwell to have much choice left him," said she; "it is rather the taste of the boatman who brought him ashore, than his own, which has been consulted."

"May be so," said Apperton, and the conversation dropped. They continued their walk along the cliff, to what is now the most fashionable part of Brighton, but which had scarcely grown so decidedly elegant five years since. Every thing amazed and surprized Apperton, to whom every thing out of the city was new and curious; but still he recurred every now and then to the sad state of things in London, and his sorrow that he had been obliged to leave it just as he did.

To Kate there appeared a strangeness in her change of situation, which she could hardly account for. There she was, the wife of Apper-

ton, and, as far as his manners and conversation went, she might have been his wife for half a dozen years before. The ceremony, the journey, all the concomitant events, had occurred rather as if they were matters of course, than the indications of a total change of character and station; and the metamorphoses had been effected so tranquilly and so philosophically, that her marriage seemed more like a dream than a reality.

The extraordinary coincidence of the arrival of Somerford, and the extremely inconvenient position which he had taken up, occupied much of her thoughts during the walk; all the painful regrets of losing him, and the melancholy pleasure of finding him still alive, gave way for the moment to the embarrassment which his vicinity to them caused. It made no very great difference while Apperton and she were alone there, because Somerford did not know the name of Apperton, and Apperton was equally unacquainted with that of Somerford; but when her father and brother, and Moss, arrived, the secret must inevitably out.

It was true, she was now the wife of another; and therefore her father could have no great cause for exhibiting an asperity of feeling towards Charles, which the idea of a marriage

between him and Kate had formerly excited; but it seemed equally probable to Mrs. Apperton, that Somerford, now he had grown to "man's estate," had obtained promotion in the army, and had run, as it appeared, a course of popularity in India, would feel his situation extremely different from that, in which he found himself at the time of his departure; and she considered, that although indebted for his first start in life to her father, he might not be disposed, after the cavalier treatment he had subsequently received at his hands, to meet *him* so cordially as might have been wished: at all events, their juxta position was a subject of incessant torment to her, and she was only divided in her mind, between at once confiding the whole story to Apperton, or waiting till the arrival of the Maxwells to develope the mystery connected with their invalid neighbour.

It did not appear, however, very improbable, that her father might receive the intelligence, not only of Somerford's arrival in England, but of his actual domestication at Brighton, even before Kate could have an opportunity of confiding her thoughts and feelings to the old gentleman; for Maxwell would naturally be amongst the first persons to whom Somerford would write,

seeing that now his mother was dead, the surgeon was almost the only person likely to feel any interest in his affairs.

The day closed—as even the saddest day will; and when the stillness of evening, unbroken by the dashing of the surf along the shore—for it was calm—had, as it were, set in, and while Apperton, brisk bridegroom as he was, was yawning and looking, first at his watch and then at his wife, Kate could not stop her ears to the sound of voices, which, thanks to the thinness of Brighton walls, were perfectly audible from the drawing-room of the adjoining house. The bell was heard—could she forget that it was rung by Somerford's hand? In the call of a servant, she distinctly recognized his voice; nay, she even heard his well-known laugh in reply to some observation, which, like the rest of the conversation carried on, was, though perfectly audible, quite indistinct.

"How plainly we hear those people in the next house," said Apperton; "we must take care and say nothing very loud here, that we don't want to be known all over the neighbourhood."

"One only hears a sort of murmuring noise,"

said Kate, "there is no distinguishing the words of a conversation."

"I suppose," said her husband, "it is that rich chap in the fly, talking over his perils and escapes on the voyage. I wish he lodged in this house; we'd have asked him to tell us his history, just to pass away time; for I must say, Brighton *does* appear to me rather a dullish place, taken altogether."

"To you," said Kate, "accustomed to the constant bustle of business, it must appear so; but I should think a little relaxation will be serviceable to you. I know my father is never so well as here, when he can get time to run down for a few days;—but then, to be sure, his pursuits are different from yours."

"Why, so they are," said Apperton, "or rather were; for I believe I have bitten the old gentleman with the speculating mania; his mind is now almost as much occupied with city work as my own: and he will have cause to thank me for what I have done for him. Money, says some book that I once read, is like manure; stuck of a heap it has a nominal value, and there an end; but scatter it, distribute it, spread it, and it not only retains its own value, but

creates new sources of profit by the general fructification of the surrounding land."

"What, has my father been speculating, as you call it?" said Kate.

"He has made a good use of his money, under my direction." said Apperton. "If one thing happens, which cannot well fail of happening, he will, by this day three months, be worth a couple of hundred thousand pounds, Kitty."

"And if it should *not* happen?" asked Kate.

"It *must* happen?" replied the stockbroker.

"Well, then my father ought already to congratulate himself upon the vast addition you have enabled him to make to his fortune," said Mrs. Apperton.

"Why, not exactly *that*," said Apperton; "there *are* slips between the cup and the lip; and it is just possible, and that's all—that we may be beaten."

"And, in *that* case," said Katharine.

"Why, in that case, said her husband, "it will be time enough to consider what more can be done."

Short as was this conversation, and this the first too which she had ever had with Apperton upon the subject—it was of a nature to alarm

and agitate her. She had heard, in common conversation, numerous remarks upon the enormous profits probably derivable from certain speculations, and she had seen Apperton exhibit with triumph, sundry little square bits of paper, which he said were shares in this company and bonds of that loan; and she had never paid any great attention to the discussion: but now, from her husband's manner, and his restless desire to see her father, and his nervous anxiety about what was doing in the city, she began to fear that with her parent, Apperton had been more successful in extolling these securities; and, although she, of course, was ill calculated for a judge in such matters, the exercise of her common sense induced her to look with doubt and trembling to anything like an exchange of the savings of a long and active professional life, for a few bits of paper, conferring on the holder the privileges and profits of a proprietor in, perhaps, an extensive range of oxygen mines in the westernmost part of the kingdom of Utopia.

It is true, Kate had latterly remarked a change in her father's manner; he seemed to take less interest in the little amusements of his home than he formerly had done, and even the greater

objects of his life were less assiduously attended to; but the alteration did not either alarm or grieve her, since she saw with it no alteration in his health or spirits; on the contrary, he appeared more lively than she had remembered him for some years.

The secret, whatever it was, of which she had accidentally become possessed, had evidently preyed upon his mind at an earlier part of the season, and he never recurred to it, however slightly, without a sort of shuddering which it was most painful for Kate to see excited; but even the effects of *that* seemed to have vanished, and from different allusions made during his conversations with Apperton, she felt convinced that some new direction had been given to his energies—some new excitement offered to his feelings; and after the brief remarks of her husband upon the present occasion, she assured herself that he was more deeply interested in the schemes of his son-in-law, than, until this very evening, she had any idea of.

Shortly after this dialogue, the happy Apperton proposed retiring to rest; and, as if more pointedly and especially to harass and torment poor Kitty, precisely at the same hour did

Captain Charles Somerford, next door, ring *his* bell, call his servant, and repair to his chamber for the night.

While Katharine, with the assistance of her maid, was disrobing, she could hear Charles giving directions to his servant, who was in the dressing-room beyond, in a tone of voice which augured well for his lungs, whatever might have happened to his liver, to have breakfast by ten; that Mrs. Mackirkincroft and Mr. Macleod were coming to partake of that meal, and to have whitings, and prawns, and a variety of other things ready, nothing of which in itself sounded particularly sentimental, but it recalled years of time gone by; it awakened ten thousand agonizing feelings, not unmixed with a little worldly kindness, which made her grateful to Providence that one for whom she had cared so much, was, after all the accounts she had heard of his death, well enough to make such things as prawns, whitings, and Mackirkincrofts, objects of his care and solicitude.

"That 's the gentleman just come from Hingy we hear so plain in the next house there," said Mrs Alsop.

"We *do* hear very plainly, in these rooms, I think," said Kate.

"He's an uncommon nice gentleman, ma'am," said Mrs. Alsop; "his man was telling our William that he was not really ill, but weak like, and got a cold on his longs, and so they brought him up in a fly; but he is quite young, and, from what I could see of him, uncommon good-looking."

"You seem to have made yourself pretty well acquainted with the people next door, I think," said Mrs. Apperton, "considering the shortness of the time we and they have been here."

"Why you see, Ma'am," said Alsop, "both these houses belong to the same missis; so there's a door between 'em in the kitchens, and then, here it an't like London; all the doors open on the latch, and one runs up one area steps and down the other, and sometimes they come and borrow a light, or a drop of hot water from *us*, and sometimes I pop in, if we havn't a good fire in our room, and warm myself at theirs, so that its more like one house than two; so we know one another very soon in such places as these."

If any thing could have added to Kate's embarrassment, it was this ingenuous statement

of Mrs. Alsop's; whence she discovered, that, in point of fact, she and her rejected, yet fondly loved Somerford, were actually living under the same roof; and that however the name of Apperton might deceive him for a day or two, her *own* Charles must, in a short time, know the fact. Her concealment from her husband of the knowledge she had gained of his rival's proximity, although it appeared to her something like duplicity, was not of a very heinous nature, and she most assuredly would have been satisfied to continue it, but that, as I have said before, she foresaw the arrival of her father and brother must inevitably put an end to the delusion. To deny *then* that she knew who their neighbour was, would be a falsehood to which she could not stoop, more especially after the communication made by Alsop; while, on the other hand, she saw nothing but confusion, unsettling of minds, exciting doubts, and even jealousies, by confessing the whole story to her husband, who would naturally think the very worst of her former attachment to Somerford, from never having heard his name mentioned, or the slightest recurrence ever made to the circumstance, in a family proverbially open and in-

genuous, and who boasted that they had no secrets from each other, always excepting professional ones.

In a temper of mind likely to be excited by these circumstances, superadded to a belief that Apperton had induced her father to hazard much more than he ought to have risked in the pursuit of speculations, the nature of which it was impossible he should comprehend, Mrs. Katharine Apperton betook herself to her rest; and when she laid her head on her pillow to await her husband's approach, she discovered, by the sound of a slight cough with which Captain Charles Somerford appeared still to be afflicted, that her head was distant from *his*, about one inch more than the thickness of the wall which separated the houses.

In the midst of this combination of difficulties, Mrs. Alsop quitted her mistress for the evening: of course we must in delicacy do the same; and if the reader please, with the same amiable ceremony, of wishing her "a very good night."

Whatever might be the state of affairs at Brighton, the atmosphere of Burlington Gardens was none of the clearest; the family, unsettled and broken up, seemed divided into

little factions, and on the very day when Somerford took up his abode close to the Appertons at Brighton, Moss, having despatched his brother to the Fens, dined away from Maxwell's by choice. Maxwell, the elder, had throughout the day displayed a degree of irritability very unusual with him, and evinced agitation and low spirits by turns. Any thing likely to disturb the perfect comfort and serenity of his evening, Godfrey Moss could not by any means endure; and he therefore accepted some invitation, or perhaps made one for himself, with a friend, which would carry him out of the influence of what he considered the surgeon's temporary ill-temper.

This, while it was extremely agreeable to Moss, was not less convenient to Edward, who, as it may easily be imagined, was particularly anxious to conclude the very interesting conversation which he had commenced with his father the previous evening, and which had so nearly arrived at its crisis, when it was interrupted. The elder Maxwell, however, had throughout the day shown symptoms of ill-humour, which Edward feared might perhaps prevent the termination of his eulogy upon the unknown beauty, and his confession of having seen his respected parent enjoying *a téte a téte* with her.

But he was disappointed, and disappointed in a manner which surprised and astounded him. No sooner were the servants withdrawn, and he was left with his father, than the old gentleman opened the subject himself.

"Edward," said Maxwell, "I have always thought, and not unfrequently said, that the romance of real life is more filled with extraordinary events, than the mind of the poet or the fabulous historian would imagine. Your beautiful vision is discovered to me, and by the merest accident."

"You know her then, sir?" said Edward.

"I do," said the surgeon; "and only this day, during all my acquaintance with her, did she mention the circumstance of your having preserved her life; for the strongest of all possible reasons; until yesterday, she was not aware that we were connected, or even acquainted with each other."

"She recognized me at church then, I presume?" said Edward.

"Precisely so."

"Whither she had gone——?"

"—— at her own request, and by my permission, to witness the ceremony that made my daughter——"

"—— the wife of Apperton," said Edward, who saw that his father was rather at a loss to finish the sentence. "But how," continued he, "how came you acquainted with her; and how should *she* be interested in what concerns my sister?"

"One who is warmly attached to *me*," said Maxwell, "cannot surely be indifferent to those who are so dear to me as Katharine is."

"Attached, sir," said Edward.

"Yes, attached," replied Maxwell.

"And who is she?" asked Edward.

"That, my son," answered the surgeon, "you must never know."

"Never, sir!" exclaimed Edward.

"Never," repeated Maxwell: "circumstances render it imperative on me to conceal her name, her prospects, her rank and station from *you*; a further connexion with her would be destruction to us all. Shame and ignominy would fall upon you, and eternal ruin upon me."

"What, is she guilty then?" said Edward, "and have I——"

"As pure as heaven's own spirits," said Maxwell; "exemplary in every relation of life, affectionate, kind, accomplished, amiable, and virtuous."

"And yet," said Edward, "danger and ignominy would follow a connexion with her."

"I have said it," said Maxwell; "and you know, Ned, I seldom speak hastily, or even lightly."

"Is she yet unmarried?" said Edward.

"She is," replied his father.

"Where are her friends?" said Edward;—in pity tell me that.

"Never, never!" said Maxwell. "Nay, you must promise me never again to recur to the subject, never to mention her more."

"I have seen you with her in the open day," said Edward; "there can be nothing disgraceful in such an association, or you, with your high character, and placed in a situation of such delicacy as yours, would not have thus exposed yourself to the public eye in her society."

"You saw me with her," said Maxwell; "when—where?"

"Some few days since, in the Green Park," said Edward.

"You knew then of *my* acquaintance with her," said Maxwell; "tell me by what means—tell me, I entreat, I implore, I insist—by what means could you have discovered that I knew her?"

"By the simplest of all means," said Edward—"I saw you with her."

"Accidentally," said Maxwell earnestly.

"Of course, sir," said Edward; "I had no clue to her, or I should have used it long before."

"And did you follow us?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," said his son, "I did not," with an air of something which was meant for dignity, and to convey to his father a magnificent idea of high feeling, and being "very much above doing such a thing" as watch his parent under such circumstances; when, in fact, he knew he could not keep them in view without being discovered himself.

"How comes it, that you did not mention this before?" said Maxwell.

"I have had no opportunity," said Edward. "I assure you it has preyed heavily on my spirits; when I beheld her again in church yesterday morning, I resolved not to sleep until I had come to an understanding with you on the subject; and, as you know, I had actually begun a conversation, yesterday evening, when Moss and his brother came back from the play."

"She tells me," said Maxwell, "that her

surprise, when she beheld *you* present, as part of Kate's family, was unbounded; and, as we agreed to day, the combination of circumstances, which have jumbled us all together, is so far beyond the belief of common-place people, that, if it were written in a book, the reader would call it, if not impossible, too improbable to appear the least natural."

"And what *is* that combination, sir?" said Edward.

"Ned," said Maxwell, "it would be a happy day for me when I could explain the whole of the circumstances to you; at present, I have only to enforce upon you the obligation of silence. You have seen Maria—"

"Maria!—her name is Maria, then," said Edward; feeling that he had gained something, even by knowing so much more of her than he did before.

"Yes, yes," said Maxwell, looking foolish at having even gone the harmless length of letting slip the christian name of the mysterious being who seemed to influence them all. "Maria; or, if it be not, it will serve as well as any other to think of her by; for I again repeat, that even her christian name must never be mentioned."

"But am I then forbidden, if I see her accidentally, from speaking to her?" said Edward; "may I not, now that she knows my name and station, and, above all, knows that I have the recommendation of being your son, may I not prefer my suit?"

"Your suit!" said Maxwell; "call it your destruction, Ned. So long as the feelings and prejudices of society exist, a marriage with such a person, even in an ordinary case, would be ruinous; but in her's, one single step farther in your acquaintance, plunges us all into ruin and destruction."

"All!" said Edward; "tell me that *I* alone shall sacrifice every hope, every prospect, but that of obtaining her, I'll risk the last."

"Ruin would overwhelm us *all*," said Maxwell; "believe me, if the case were not urgent, imperative, vital, I would not press this upon your mind; but I repeat, for the last time that I shall ever speak on the subject, farther connexion with that young woman would be destruction to us all."

"Answer me, father, as you claim my duty," said Edward, "is she, herself,—whatever may be the mystery that hangs over her—free from stain and guilt?"

"I have already told you, Edward," said Maxwell, "that she is excellent and exemplary, in every relation of life; but *you* must never see her more."

"Oh, father, father! what have I done to deserve this dreadful sentence?" exclaimed Edward.

"There is no fault on either side," said Maxwell; "you have been miraculously thrown together, who ought, of all other human beings, never to have met; and I would to heaven, that I had checked her desire to see Kate's wedding, for if she had not been present at that ceremony, we should have lived, and perhaps died, in ignorance of the real state of the case."

"No," said Edward, "after I had seen *you* with her, watched her anxiety until you came, her ease and happiness when you arrived, mingled with her watchfulness of discovery, I could not have suffered the subject to rest until I had ascertained the fact."

"You have ascertained no particular fact now," said Maxwell; "nor will you ever ascertain more. I regret the circumstances bitterly, but there must be an end of it."

"But, tell me, sir, what affairs, what busi-

ness, could take this young lady on board a ship called the Whilelmina, outward bound, commanded by a Captain Randolph."

"What!" cried, or rather screamed, the elder Maxwell, with a look so full of ghastly terror, that Edward trembled like a leaf to see his sire so moved. "What ship! what captain! what are you talking of, sir?"

"I mean, sir," said Edward, absolutely shaking with alarm at the unusual agitation of his father, "that in my pursuit of this young lady, I traced her to a ship so called, and so commanded. She stayed on board some time; but I lost her eventually, by her landing on the opposite bank of the river to that on which I had posted myself."

"The ship you spoke of has sailed," said Maxwell, coldly and sullenly.

"I know she has sailed from the river," answered Edward; "for she sailed that very night, and spoiled my errand when I went to look for her the next morning."

"Have no more such errands, Ned," said Maxwell; "the ship has nothing to do with Maria, nor Maria with the ship; but if she had, I should charge you upon your duty to stir no further in the pursuit, which, as I have

said before, and now repeat, could only end in ruin to yourself, and destruction to your family."

"In all things, sir," said Edward, "that you command, I solemnly promise to obey you; but if I should accidentally see her, I cannot promise so rigidly to keep my faith as not to speak to her."

"You may speak to her as you please," said Maxwell, "whenever you see her again. I only bind you to silence on the subject here: as to any other part of your conduct, I lay no restriction upon it. I have put to you the danger and disgrace of a connexion with her, forcibly and powerfully. I believed you when you pledged yourself to obey me; but before I put you to the test—she was so disposed of, that even if you broke your faith with your father, you could have gained nothing from your mistress—YOU NEVER WILL—YOU NEVER CAN, SEE HER AGAIN."

After the conversation had reached this point, a calm suddenly succeeded. Edward, unable to endure what appeared to him the refinement of all earthly cruelty, rushed to his room; and his father, after congratulating himself upon

the extraordinary discovery he had that day made, and the decisive measures he had adopted, to put an end to the affair, drank two or three glasses of wine hastily, and afterwards fell into a train of thinking which would not bear disclosure, but which pained and agitated him beyond description. From his reflections he was aroused by Moss, on his return from his early dinner, whose only observation before he ordered his customary gin and water was, that Maxwell was a wise man to snooze by his own fireside on such a miserable night, and that it was lucky he had no company; for if he had, he would have thought it necessary, for the show of the thing, to have been "sent for" in a hurry, and have gone through the ceremony of driving three or four miles to some poor cretur of a patient who did not expect him, in order to exhibit to his guests the great extent of his practice, and the constant desire that there was for his services.

Edward did not re-appear during the evening, and Moss and Maxwell had a long *tête-a-tête* to themselves; but it was observable that although the surgeon conversed with his companion upon every topic connected with the

family, of the most secret and delicate nature imaginable, he never let fall one single syllable relative to Maria, the history and mystery of the good ship Whilelmina, or her respectable master, Mr. Captain Randolph, of the Grange road, Bermondsey.

CHAPTER III.

Now, in this dear embrace I lose the toils
Of ten years' war; absence with all its pains
Is by this charming moment wiped away.
All bounteous gods, sure never was a heart
So full, so blest as mine."

THOMSON.

THE reader will perceive that the Maxwell family is getting into difficulties, and difficulties of a rather complicated nature; which while they affect particularly every individual connected with it, seem to press upon it generally; and I am afraid, if I am thoroughly candid, that I must prognosticate, as people do regarding ladies under particular circumstances, that they must be worse before they are better.

It is odd enough, that the *dénouément* of Maria's story, and the unexpected arrival of Somerford, should have excited in the breast of Edward a feeling of resentment against his father's present needless cruelty, and revived in

the bosom of Katharine all the sorrows she had felt, when, upon a former occasion, he had acted in a similar manner towards herself. The surgeon's family practice was certainly none of the tenderest; a decisive *cut* seemed the principle of action; immediate separation, without the ceremony of parting, appeared to be his universal panacea; and as he had ten years before carried off Charles Somerford, and embarked him in the Honourable Company's ship Mulligatawny, to put an end to his acquaintance with his daughter, so it appeared to his son, he had, in this case, actually kidnapped the delicate Maria, and transported her for life on board the Whilelmina, Captain Randolph, in order to conclude the connexion between her and his son.

The ardent lover, however, nothing daunted by the *veto* of his father, and confiding somewhat in the leniency which the old gentleman exhibited in the case of Miss Epsworth's defection, resolved that if the Whilelmina was yet at any of the outports, thither would he transport himself; and if it were true that under any circumstances the lovely girl had been induced or compelled to quit England, or if her business or pleasure, whichever it might be,

actually led her to abandon the shores of what he concluded to be her native country, equally true should it be found that he had accompanied her—aye, to the farthest verge of the world;—such is the force of first impressions, such the power of woman!

Full of this determination, Edward directed his servant to prepare a portmanteau for a journey; in what direction he should go would be determined by the intelligence he might during the following day acquire; and having selected all the valuable articles of which he was possessed, in the way of snuff-boxes, chains, rings, and other personals, he reckoned up his stock of cash in hand, and found himself master of some seventy pounds, amounting to nearly a quarter part of the annual allowance his father had made him; which—since candour upon all family matters is absolutely necessary—amounted to four hundred pounds per annum, exclusive of all tradesmen's bills, which the old gentleman annually paid, and, the free quarters, (or what in Ireland is called the "run of his teeth") which were open to himself and any of his acquaintance in his father's house.

In the morning, when he arose and saw his trunk filled for the expedition, and reflected

moreover that he was about to take a step which would indubitably separate his father and himself for ever, the felt, for he first time, doubtful whether he should pursue the bright vision any farther. He had been told by his parent, that ruin and disgrace would be the consequences of any connexion with the young lady; he had himself seen her accosted by people of most suspicious appearance, and as he afterwards discovered, not of the most respectable profession; there was also a degree of trickery in her escape from his pursuit at the Golden Cross, which could only have been carried into effect by a person intimately acquainted with the *locale* of a London stable-yard; all this he admitted to himself, and admitted, that even their first interview took place in a part of the metropolis where it was extremely improbable a young lady of any very great respectability would have been found, unaccompanied by a protector, and unattended by a servant; but even these reflexions, however much for the moment they might damp, could not extinguish, the desire he felt to prosecute his search after her; for although what he had collected in his mind to serve as reasons for not pursuing her, was plausible and rational enough, still, if

her associates at one period were disreputable, his father had himself been her companion at another ; his father too, who, even *now,* declared that she was virtuous and exemplary in all the relations of life, and yet that she must infallibly entail disgrace and ruin upon them all, if she became connected with them.

The fact of her being alone when he first saw her, which always weighed upon his mind, and which, as a feature of the case, was always open to the satire of Moss, he was inclined to lay less stress upon, than many other people might have done; for he was aware, mixing, as he did, pretty generally with society, that the wives, nay, the unmarried daughters of highly respectable people, are permitted by their parents and connexions to go shopping, or calling on friends, or visiting bazaars, or benefiting their health, without any servant or attendant. It is true, that such laxity produces in many instances promiscuous flirtations in the streets; sometimes assignations in the park, and occasionally perhaps worse consequences ; but habit and custom reconcile the strangest incongruities, and the wealthy tradesman, or even the professional man of moderate pretensions, sees neither fear nor danger in sending his daughters, (or even

one, which is for various reasons a thousand times worse,) adrift upon the *pavé;* and if they return, as they almost invariably do, safe home in time to dress for dinner, the adventures in which they may have been engaged during the morning's stroll, never being suspected by their parents, are never inquired after; and the young ladies proceed upon another healthful excursion the next day, provided the weather be fine, and the streets dry. The thing that chiefly mystified Edward was the connexion which somehow existed between this dangerous delightful creature and his family; for having perfect faith in his father's assurances of her goodness and propriety, backed, as they were, by the fact of his having publicly walked with her in the streets of London, in the open glare of day, it was quite clear, from the interest he took in her, and from the fact of her having been present at his sister's wedding, that she must be somehow most interestingly mixed up with all their proceedings..

He once glanced at the possibility that she might be the daughter of his father, and not of his mother—but the high character which it was essentially necessary his respected parent, in *his* profession, should maintain, put that sup-

position quite out of the question; so after debating, and worrying, and torturing himself for a considerable length of time, he came back to his first resolution of searching for her, it appearing to him absolutely necessary to his peace and comfort, putting the love and romance out of the question, to ascertain who she actually was.

Having therefore made his disposition above stairs, and made up his mind to another visit to Bermondsey after breakfast, to ascertain from his fair friend with the cockatoos, where the good ship Whilelmina actually was, and when she was positively to sail, the young gentleman proceeded to the breakfast-parlour, where he found his father in a state of any thing but placidity.

Before him, on the table, lay the newspaper, announcing a second great failure in the city—a letter from Apperton, entreating him to come off forthwith to Brighton—and a list of shares, exhibiting a most tremendous fall in one of the joint stock companies, in which Apperton was principally embarked, and in which it seemed but too probable he had committed the surgeon.

"We must go to Brighton to day, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Brighton!" exclaimed Edward; "is any one ill?"

"Ill at ease, Apperton appears," replied Maxwell; "he wants to see me, and he cannot leave Kate—so we will be off after breakfast. I must write some few letters of apology to some patients and—I must return to town in three or four days—but it is best to go."

"I am afraid," said Edward, "I shall not be able to go so soon as to day—I——"

"Law business, I presume, keeps you," said his father, sneeringly.

"No," replied Edward; but I have some engagements which——"

"—— you must put off, as I shall put off mine," said Maxwell.

"I will endeavour to do so," said Edward, taking up the newspaper, and glancing his eyes in all directions to discover the "ship news," where he anticipated some intelligence might be found about the Whilelmina, on board of which he had made up his mind his fair friend was actually stowed.

"Have you seen Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," replied Edward.

"I suppose we must take him with us, or

Kitty will be quite disappointed," said Maxwell.

"A short honeymoon seclusion Apperton makes of it," said Edward, smiling.

"Honey," said Maxwell, with an expression of countenance indicative of his knowledge that Apperton's happiness must be in no small degree deteriorated by the events which were going on in the city.

"By heavens! see this," exclaimed Ned; "did you read the ship news, sir?"

"Not I," said Maxwell; "ship news does not interest me,—what is it?"

"Listen," said Edward, and read as follows:—"Brighton—Yesterday morning, the Hon. Company's ship Lady Simkins was off this place, where she landed her purser, who set off immediately for London with the letters and despatches. She also landed some passengers, and, after remaining in sight upwards of three hours, proceeded on her way to the river."

"Prodigiously interesting, upon my word," said Maxwell; "if Lady Simkins herself, who is some slop-selling director's wife, I suppose, had been there instead of her cumbrous name-

sake, I should have been quite as much edified."

"Nay, but the point, sir," said Edward; "you havn't come to the point."

"Well," said his father, "pray go on then; "let's hear the point."

"Names of passengers landed," said Edward:—"The Hon. Alexander Snob, Macleod, Secretary to Government in the Twankytwaddle department of the twenty-four Pergunnahs; Mrs. Mackirkincroft, wife of his Excellency Hildebrand Hogg Mackirkincroft, Governor of Palamabog, and five children."

"Well," interrupted Maxwell, "any more of them?"

"Yes, one," said Edward, "Captain Charles Somerford, of H. M. forces, from the Cape of Good Hope."

"Somerford home!" exclaimed Maxwell; "why he has been dead these six months."

"Then he has come to life again," said Edward; "for here he is in black and white."

"And at Brighton, too," said Maxwell; "I suppose merely for a few hours. I shall, no doubt, hear from him,—Somerford—good heavens! how strange!"

And hereabouts the old gentleman fell into

a sort of reverie, from which he presently awoke.

"Why, then, all the reports of his death at the Cape must have been false."

To this remark, the very natural result of a conclusion to which the elder Maxwell had rationally enough come, upon finding the young object of his former interest, hopes, and suspicions, alive and merry, Edward did not pay quite so much attention as filial duty might justly have extracted; and perhaps the reader may already guess why: it was no neglect of proper respect, nor, indeed, was it from any want of interest in a matter which he knew could not fail very deeply to interest his sister, but it was, because under the same head of "*Ship News*," which he mechanically read to its end, he saw the words which follow:—"Portsmouth—sailed the Hero, Smith, for Boston, and the Whilelmina, Randolph, for Bombay."

The last words fixed his eyes and rivetted his attention; all his speculations about Maria as connected with that vessel were at a glance overturned. The ship to which he fancied her conveyed, had sailed two days before, and she had been in his father's society only yesterday.

This new mystification, however, had one good effect, it rendered needless his fly-away trip to the outports; and, moreover, made his journey to Brighton less objectionable. He resolved, however, to take no notice of the event to his father, and almost consoled himself with the belief that the declaration made by the old gentleman on the preceding evening, that he never should, and never *could* see Maria more, amounted to little else than one of the finely rounded periods with which it is considered good taste, by an angry parent, to conclude an interesting conversation with a refractory child.

"I wonder if Kate will see Somerford," said Maxwell, reverting to the curious coincidence of his arrival; "had she heard of his death, do you know, Ned?"

Edward, who at the moment being a good deal involved in his own affairs, forgot exactly whether it had been agreed between Kate and himself to deny or admit this knowledge, hesitated for a moment in his answer; but as he really *was* puzzled, he resolved to make a merit of necessity, and try the truth, as having at all events as good a chance as any thing else; and he admitted that she had.

"Then," said Maxwell, "the surprise will

be the more striking, if they meet; and as Apperton has most assuredly never heard Somerford's name mentioned, it will altogether appear very extraordinary to him; but, God knows, he has enough to think of just now, besides little punctilios or delicacies, in which, at the best of times, he is no very scientific person."

"It is strange," said Edward, making a plunge at a novel reflection, "how readily people repeat and disseminate falsehoods. I shall be very glad to see Somerford again."

"I have no objection to see and receive him as usual," said Maxwell. "I should have strong objections to him as a connexion, although I believe, in every moral point of view, the young man is unexceptionable; he seems to have been successful in promotion, and yet purchase with *him* must be out of the question."

"I suppose the old Oriental wish of bloody wars and sickly seasons has been realized in his case," said Edward.

"And so, then, Master Ned," said Maxwell, in a tone half-playful and half-solicitous, "you are made the depository of Kate's secrets."

"Of all, I verily believe," said Edward,

" I don't think she ever conceals any thing she knows from me; although I must admit that her confidence has only latterly been so implicitly extended to me."

" What, Edward!" said his father, fixing his eyes steadily on his son, " does she confide *all* that is confided to her, to you?"

" All, sir," said young Maxwell, " with one exception—the secret she discovered when she went unadvisedly into your room; upon that, I have tried her again and again, tempted her with secrets of my own, frightened her, threatened her, but all to no purpose; whatever it was she saw upon that occasion I know not, but she is there immoveably close."

" She is a good girl, and I was right in my opinion of her," said Maxwell; " the secret, abstractedly is about as important as that of freemasonry; but since she was entrusted with it, as the test of her sincerity, it has become no doubt her pride, as well as her duty, to keep it as inviolably."

" Why I must do her more justice than that," said Edward; " for by the way she alludes to the subject, it should seem that the secret *is* something more than a test, especially

as it was one she accidentally discovered, and which was certainly not offered to her."

"Let me hear no more about it Edward," said Maxwell. "Kate rashly intruded, and saw what she most certainly should not have seen; but as I have interdicted the subject, I trust you will abstain from bringing it to her recollection, as rigidly as she refuses to satisfy your curiosity."

"Well sir, I cry a bargain," said Edward. "and here it is: tell me some little more of Maria, and the other story never shall be thought of by me; tell me, what it it is you mean by saying that I never shall, and never can, see her more?"

"What I have said is the truth," answered Maxwell; "she is beyond your reach, beyond your ken—and I repeat, you never can behold her again."

"Then she has *not* sailed in the Whilelmina," said Edward.

"*I* never said she had sailed in any ship," replied Maxwell; "you started the story about a ship, to which you told *me* you had traced her: I know nothing of that part of her history; but to save you all further anxiety, I

repeat to you, upon the honour of a gentleman, that neither will *you* ever see her again, nor to the best of my belief shall I."

"This is a most perplexing, most provoking mystery," said Edward.

"Oh, come none o' your mysteries, Master Neddums," said Moss, entering the room in a pace something between hobbling and rolling. "Let's have the muffins now, and leave the mystery till after breakfast."

"What d'ye think, Moss?" said the elder Maxwell.

"Of nothing but breakfast," said Moss.

"Charles Somerford is returned alive and merry, as far as I know," said Maxwell.

"Well, I'm glad o' that too, poor boy," said Moss, "I wish he had been here a month sooner."

"But where do you think he *is*?" said Edward.

"How should I know?" said Moss. "Have you rung for the muffins?"

"At Brighton at this very minute," exclaimed the elder Maxwell.

"Better and better," cried Moss.

"Where, please God, we shall all be, by this day's dinner time," said the surgeon.

"What, going to travel?" cried Godfrey, "me and all! Have up the cold meat—let's lay a good foundation, and to day's as good a day as any other. What is Kittums tired of her husband, or is the stock-brokering cretur tired of her? eh! I knew how long the honey-moon would last."

"It is business which induces me to visit him so early after his marriage," said Maxwell.

"Oh, I dare say," said Moss; "some of the famous air bubble concerns are going to burst, are they?—some new South Sea affair."

"Never mind what it is," said Maxwell, who repressed Godfrey's energetic denunciation of all the financial quackeries of the day, with something more of earnestness than usual. "Whatever it is, it is to my advantage to see Apperton; and therefore I am sure you will not oppose my going, nor refuse to accompany me."

"Not I, Mack," said Moss: *your* carriage, *your* post-horses, your time, and your convenience—of course; name your hour—(ring again for the muffins, Ned,)—and I'll be ready—my wardrobe, as you know, does not take long packing. And are you to be of the party, Neddums?"

"Yes," said Maxwell, "he is. The fact is, I could not well go without him; for if Apperton should be obliged to run up to town, there would be nobody to take care of Kate in her walks and excursions, for I am soon tired of such expeditions now."

"Who knows, Ned, but you may find your Long Acre Venus there, going back every morning to the sea, whence she rose," said Moss.

"For *my* part," said Edward, "I really do not see how I can contrive to get off the engagements I have made; I ——"

"Say to your friends," said Maxwell, "that your father wishes you to accompany him to Brighton; if they are friends worth having, they will not be offended at your obedience to a parent's wishes."

It was clear that Brighton was the point at which they were all fated to arrive by dinner time. Edward's portmanteau was already packed and prepared, but he little thought when he gave the directions for getting it ready, what its destination was to be. However, as he clearly saw his going was inevitable, he made the best of it; and, as it may be imagined, very easily got rid of a string of engagements, which had, in point of fact, existed only in his own mind.

Matters being thus arranged, and the carriage ordered at one, Edward announced his readiness to attend his father, and was rewarded by the old gentleman with an affectionate shake of the hand. The surgeon proceeded, in his town chariot, to extricate himself from his professional entanglements for two or three days; and at a very few minutes after the appointed time, the trio took their departure from the metropolis.

Strange things had been doing during the morning at the place to which they were going, and strange things yet remained to be done; but no matter—we must wait with patience the due developement of events, which, however, the reader may already begin to anticipate.

It would be treason to Mrs. Apperton to dilate much upon the nature of her feelings with regard to Somerford, since it is an unquestionable fact, that she had determined to overcome and conquer them; but it would be wilfully concealing truth, which ought to be told, to pass over in silence the dreadful struggle which the conflict cost her.

A thousand times during the night did she regret that she had not, at once, admitted to Apperton her acquaintance with Charles, ex-

plained the nature of their connexion and intimacy, and referred to it, as a mere matter for conversation now that years had rolled away, and that the change of circumstances had made her the wife of another---but she had not done so: at the moment of Apperton's discovery of Somerford's name upon the trunk, she lost her presence of mind, and gave, by concealment, an air of guilt and mystery to an occurrence, which, if told at once, would have proved only one of thousands of instances which every day turn up, where young lovers, in early life, are rejected for want of the ostensible means of maintaining an establishment, and educating a family. The feelings under which Kate suffered are not to be described. As for rest, she had none; and it must have been clear to her husband, if he had turned his thoughts into that channel, that her disquietude and evident unhappiness must have had some more serious causes than those to which she had attributed them; namely, fatigue and over-exercise during the day.

She rose from her bed unrefreshed and feverish. When she proceeded to breakfast, she beheld, under the windows, and before the door of the adjoining house, an absolute cavalcade of donkeys and ponies, covered with Mackirkin-

crofts, the mother endeavouring to preserve order amongst the young "natives," while the well-powdered Mr. Macleod was making the amiable to her, after the fashion of 1792. At this juncture she again beheld Somerford, who was amusing himself by pelting the children with pellets of bread, and making himself, in various ways, as agreeable as possible to his newly arrived guests, who shortly after entered the house, and proceeded to breakfast, while the younger scions betook themselves on an excursion to the Downs, for health and exercise.

Charles Somerford appeared to Kate to have grown since they parted—he was certainly taller, and most certainly much handsomer: his features, which were regular and well formed, had assumed a more intellectual expression, and the pallid hue of ill health gave to his intelligent eyes a brightness and power, which were full as fascinating as they ought to have been to Kate, under the circumstances. His figure altogether was improved, and his manner, and the ease which an association with the world had given him since their separation, had so greatly added to the powerful attractions which he even before possessed, that Mrs. Apperton's self reproaches for having consented to

abandon the hope of being his, were as painful almost as the exercise of that self constraint, which perpetually reminded her that she was actually—anothers.

"Kate, dear," said Apperton, in a voice of kindness which sounded as unmusical to her ears as the croaking of a frog, or the drone of a bagpipe, "things look up in the city; my letters this morning, speak of more failures; but in *our* affairs—I mean your father's and mine—we are doing prodigiously well, and all our hopes will be realized."

"But they will come to us to-day?" said Kate.

"Oh, I conclude they will," said Apperton; "I begged your father to come, and Ned, I am sure, will not let him come alone."

"And Mr. Godfrey Moss," said Kate, "will not let himself be left alone; so we shall have the whole party."

"I have arranged about the beds, Kate," said Apperton; "there are two rooms in this house for your father and Ned, or Moss, whoever prefers sleeping here, and one bed-room the mistress of the house has let me have next door. So ther'll be no puddling about at night to a distant sleeping place. I hate that sort of breaking up—it would not suit Mousetrap to

have far to puddle; but by this arrangement, for which I hope you give me credit, we shall all be together."

"Yes, I see," said Kate, "very convenient indeed; is the Indian gentleman going away, then?"

"No---oh, no!" said Apperton, "he stays; he occupies only the front room, and dressing-room up stairs; so that Moss, or Ned, can have the back room in that house; a very nice comfortable place too—I've been looking at it."

At this period of the conversation the jingle of a Brighton piano-forte resounded in the adjoining drawing-room; and after some little preparation, Kate had the satisfaction of hearing Capt. Charles Somerford play upon the flute, (an instrument on which he was a capital performer,) two or three airs which she had given him years before, and which, from their order of performance, she was pretty well convinced were actually read from the book into which she had copied them, and which the well known sounds, by a natural association of ideas, brought before her eyes as plainly, as if she were singing from it herself. The accompaniment was evidenly furnished by Mrs. Mackirkincroft, and no doubt the breakfast was made up for the

purpose of trying these little "snatches" together, about which Charles had probably been talking during the voyage, when no instrument was at hand.

"Musical, too," said Apperton; "why, Kate, if we strike up an acquaintance with our high and mighty neighbour, you'll be quite in your element; but I suppose it isn't the fashion to be sociable at these watering places."

Poor Mr. Apperton might just at that moment have supposed anything he pleased, for his lady was so entirely engrossed with the combination of events which were occurring, that she was insensible to his observation, pertinent as it was. She felt herself like a poor isolated wretch, standing on the very edge of a whirlpool, towards which she was gradually drawn, and in which she fully anticipated destruction. Apperton's second appeal, and invitation to walk, roused her, and she prepared to obey and attend him—but she moved mechanically. One sole object engrossed her thoughts and mind, and she neither could see, nor hear, nor think of any thing else.

The walk was commenced—and—must I confess—I suppose so—that the dignified, well-regulated, high-minded Mrs. Katherine Apperton,

as she left the house, leaning, too, on her husband's arm, condescended (degraded herself would be the word with very high-flying ladies) so far, as to cast her eyes towards the windows of Somerford's room, and that, too, in the hope of again seeing him. She, however, was disappointed, and the deserted appearance of the windows and balcony, induced her to believe that the whole breakfast party had gone forth to take their exercise. Now, then, even getting away from home did poor Kate no good, for whatever advantageous effect the change of scene, or the exercise, or the air, or the amusement, might produce upon her health and spirits, the constant dread and apprehension of meeting Somerford at every corner she turned, effectually counterbalanced it; her existence was one constant flutter; and, as I have already said, that her embarrassment escaped the observation of her husband, she might have been thankful to bonds, shares, premium and discount, and other *more* interesting matters, which kept his mind fully occupied at this particular crisis.

His anxiety in this respect, however, was productive of a scene, after all. He was particularly desirous of seeing the newspapers of the day, which he had been told would be in a par-

ticular coffee-room at one o'clock. From what he should see proclaimed in the "City article" of one of these journals, he could pretty well judge how to direct the proceedings of the next morning by the post; it would, besides, relieve his anxiety, and make him a more agreeable companion for the rest of the day—that is, if the accounts were favourable; and if truth were told, few things could have occurred which would have had the effect of making him less pleasant; and therefore Kate was as anxious that he should go to this coffee-room in time, where he had been promised a sight of the paper, as he himself could possibly be; and accordingly, at his suggestion, she deposited herself in Mr. Tuppen's library, (to which they had subscribed in order to be put in print amongst the "Arrivals,") and taking her seat at a large baize covered table, plentifully strewed with periodical works, she told her "better half" that she would wait his return, but that if he should be detained beyond the period he expected, or longer than she felt comfortable in her resting-place, if he would proceed homewards, he would there be sure to find her.

Under this agreeable domestic arrangement, away went Apperton, hoping, yet dreading, to

see the ruin or exaltation of his fortnnes, in the columns of the "Times;" leaving Kate huddled up, as it were, within herself, in an agony of distracting doubt and uncertainty.

Whether what followed was the result of accident or sympathy, I do not pretend to say; or whether, which I confess I doubt, Mrs. Apperton had seen Captain Somerford in the library before he saw her; but certain and true it is, that Apperton had not reached the corner of the Steyne, which it was his intention to cross, before Kate perceived, with a feeling far beyond my power of description, that the eyes of her once fondly-beloved Charles Somerford were rivetted on her.

The expression of his countenance combined joy with doubt—he seemed to think it could not be, and yet to be assured it was, the object of all his hopes and wishes;—the conflict was but of short duration—in half a minute he was at her side.

"Katharine!" said Somerford—"is this possible—can it be you? Providence smiles on us after all; to think that I should have landed here yesterday, and to find you—you, whom of all human beings I was most anxious to behold."

"For mercy's sake, Charles," faltered Kate,

" don't, pray don't, speak so loud—these people will see—will hear."

" Well," said Charles, " I care not who hears or who sees—let them know the whole history —let them know, that I am come to prove my constancy and affection for the dearest being that ever lived, and that, unlike the general race of gentlemen in my condition, fortune has favoured me"——

" Fortune," said Kate, her eyes filling with tears—" Oh ! Charles, take me out of this place —I shall faint—I am giddy—sick."

" This way—come into the air," said Somerford ; " take my arm—dearest—dearest—this cannot be reality—isn't it too much happiness for me ?"

He offered his arm, which she almost unconsciously took ; indeed, if she had not taken it, she would scarcely have been able to support herself ; they reached the railings on the cliff, where she stopped a few moments, to imbibe the fresh air and rally her spirits.

" And where is your father ?" said Somerford—" quite well ?—and Ned grown a man, I suppose ?"

" I expect them here this very day," said Katharine.

"I did not write," continued Somerford, "for I proposed going on to London to-morrow, but the surprise I intended has properly recoiled on myself, and you have had all the merit of startling *me*. Oh! Kate, when we were so suddenly and unexpectedly separated, I thought my heart would have burst; but I suppose it was right, and all for the best, at least, there is no use in looking back to days of sorrow; the sky has brightened, and my success and some fortunate expeditions, my promotion, and my expected exchange into another regiment, with a majority, have altered the face of things, and I can now come forward in a different way, and in a somewhat better character, to claim the hand of her I love. I have had, however, a narrow escape with my life, and indeed, so many things to tell you, that I scarcely know where to begin. Why Kate—dearest," said he, seeing her tears fall in torrents, "you do not seem to participate in my joy—have I lost that place in your heart, to claim which, fondly and proudly I have now returned, after years of struggling and discomfort, endured with that one bright object in view?"

"Surely, surely," said Kate, overcome with the wretchedness of her situation, and lost to

the fact that she was become an object of curiosity to the passers by, "you might have written during this long period, if—if"——

"Written! my beloved girl," said Somerford; "of what use was my writing? You had yourself desired me not to write—you had interdicted the correspondence."

"I, Charles!" said Mrs. Apperton.

"So your father wrote me word, Kate," said Somerford; "told me that your wish was to leave our intimacy as it was, and that if hereafter, circumstances should prove favourable, and I should return in a situation to renew our connexion, it should, as it were, begin afresh; that we were too young at that period to judge fairly of each other's qualifications, and that it would be idle and ungenerous to maintain a correspondence as lovers, which might bind us to each other, and yet never turn out satisfactorily."

"If my father wrote *that*," said Kate, "I never sanctioned it, and he has much to answer for. My beloved mother, during her life-time, expressed much surprise at the cessation of your correspondence, and she—she," said Kate, "was your best and warmest friend in our

family; but when *she* died, your name was interdicted in our house, and years have elapsed since it has been breathed by any one of us, excepting myself in sorrow and in solitude."

"But now, Kate," said Somerford, "there's an end to all our cares; all solicitude is over. Who are you staying with? where are you living? tell me all. Your father will now doubtlessly receive me with kindness; and you know you used always to say, that I never suffered anger and resentment to last in my heart. I shall forget all that is past, and seek the sole object of my ambition fairly and openly at once."

"Oh Charles, Charles!" sobbed Katharine, "I cannot—my tongue cleaves to my mouth—I want breath. I never, never can say the word."

"Speak! speak! dearest, dearest Kate," said Somerford, drawing her closer to him as they walked. "There is nothing you can tell, that can give *me* pain. No, I know your heart too well."

"Indeed you know nothing of the horror that impends," said Mrs. Apperton. "Charles! I am guilty, doubly guilty; and now, at this moment, guiltier yet than ever I thought myself capable of being. I shall fall—I shall die

here in the open street—I cannot support myself."

"What *has* happened? tell me, Kate," said Somerford. "What can have happened? No calamity—no."

Oh! worse, worse than death," said Kate. "I am lost, sunk, degraded in my own eyes; debased, wretched, wretched, wretched creature that I am! Take me home, Charles. Leave me, leave me; never see me more. I scarcely know what I am saying; my father has played a cruel game. He has ruined my happiness for ever."

"Why, Kate," said a shrill voice, in a tone of unusual gaiety, close behind them, "I have been hunting you about like a leetel hare; where have you been, Kitty?"

"Who is this man?" said Somerford; "do you know him?"

"Know—oh yes!" said Kate; "I—I—found the library so hot and close, that I—I—came out"—

"Bless me!" said Apperton, looking at Somerford. "Why, I believe, sir, we are neighbours. I had the pleasure of seeing you, for a moment, when I was looking at the bed-room in your

house this morning. I'am sure I am very much obliged to you for taking care of Kitty. Hey, Kitty—what, not very ill—eh?"

"No, no," said Kitty, "not very ill. I—I—am extremely obliged to this gentleman for his attention." For, at this moment, Kate was so completely overcome by the difficulties of her situation, that she could not make up her mind either to introduce Apperton to Somerford, as her husband, or to introduce Somerford to Apperton as an old acquaintance of her's: the consequence was, that Apperton thought Somerford a particularly free and easy gentlemen, whose very particular attentions to Kate seemed in no way disagreeable to her, while Somerford was very near being extremely rude to Apperton, whose interference with Miss Maxwell he thought excessively vulgar, and entirely misplaced.

"You know Kate, sir," said Apperton.

"I have had that honour many years, sir," said Somerford.

"Why, Kate," said Apperton, "you did not say that you knew Captain Somerford when I read his name on the trunk."

"No, I—it did not strike me at the moment,"

said Mrs. Apperton; "one sees so many people in the course of a season, and then we lose sight of them in—this—in short, it did not occur at the moment. I—"

Her look to Somerford convinced him that there was a deep and serious mystery in all this affair; although such was his confidence in her fidelity, that his thoughts never once took the right current, and her delicacy was such, that she had not courage to criminate herself by announcing the fact.

"I am very glad," said Somerford, "that I had the pleasure to be near you when you were taken ill; I think you would have been seriously unwell, if you had remained in that hot library."

"And I am sure I am very much obliged to you, sir, for your attention," said Apperton. "Come, Kate, we had better go towards home."

"Yes, I think so," said Kate; who at this moment was walking in that direction, between her first lover and her present husband."

"Kate," said Somerford in a whisper, which the noise of the carriages, and the dash of the surf together, rendered inaudible to Apperton; "cannot you get rid of this fellow? Who is

he? Some friend of your father's? He's a great bore. Make some excuse, and shake him off. I'll tell him some—"

"Hush! hush!" said Kate; pressing his arm in order to check the disposition to be uncivil, which it was quite clear Charles Somerford felt.

"Good news from London for me," said Apperton; "funds up as I want them; three eighths yesterday, and one per cent. the day before;—that will do, Kate."

"What! are you turned stockbroker, Kate?" said Somerford.

"Mr. Apperton is," said Kate, drawing the conversation to the point she so much dreaded.

"Introduce me," said Charles; "civility costs nothing; a friend of the family ought to be known by me."

"I believe, Mr. Apperton," said Kate, "I ought to introduce you to Captain Somerford, since he is *my* acquaintance, in due form."

"Sir," said Apperton, taking off his hat, and bowing, "I am very glad to have the pleasure of knowing you. Tedious voyage, sir? Fine weather home?"

"I came," said Somerford, "in the ship whence I landed yesterday, only from the Cape

of Good Hope, where I had been staying some time for the benefit of my health."

"And where," said Kate, "I heard you had died."

"Indeed!" said Somerford; "I assure you that is not the fact, for here I am in *propriâ personâ*; we have been ten weeks coming from the Cape, having touched at St. Helena and Ascension. Don't you recollect, Kate, how we talked about St. Helena before I went out? and when I saw it, and saw Buonaparte's tomb—it brought all our conversation so fresh to my memory!"

"Oh, Kate," said Apperton, "you knew Captain Somerford before he went out first?"—

"Before I went any where, I should say, sir," said Somerford.

"Well, I am extremely glad you have found us here, sir," said the poor contented stockbroker. "How very odd, Kate, you should not have recollected the name at once. I—never—"

"What did you affect to forget *my* name, Kate?" said Somerford, who endeavoured, by a sort of playfulness, to hide the real interest which he felt, and the excessive disquiet which, notwithstanding his civility, Apperton's manner, and especially his manner towards Kate, had inspired.

"And is Ned grown a fine fellow?" said Somerford.

"Aye, indeed he is," said Apperton, who would speak—talking for his wife, who could not; "he has been employing himself, during the last few weeks, in hunting a beautiful shadow in the shape of a distressed damsel, who occasionally crosses his way."

"But a'n't Jane and he—"

"Oh! she is married," said Kate; "married to a Major Overall—and—gone abroad."

"Kate, what *is* the matter?" whispered Charles; "you are surely very ill."

"Pray, pray, don't mind me; for mercy's sake, don't," replied she—in another whisper.

"Do you like brill, Captain Somerford?" said Apperton.

"What, sir!" said Charles, whose whole attention was devoted to Kate while he saw, for some reasons yet unexplained, that it was considered right by her, that he should not let his interest be visible.

"Brill!—I scarcely know what it is," said Somerford.

"Fish! fish!" said Apperton; "what Godfrey Moss calls a workhouse turbot; but I like it. I have ordered one for to-day, and some

soles; perhaps, Captain Somerford, you 'll do us the pleasure of dining with us. I expect Maxwell, and Ned, and Old Mousetrap—you recollect Old Mousy?"

"Oh, perfectly!" said Somerford; "I'm sure I shall be very happy; I—" Here Kate gave his arm a tremendous squeeze—"that is, if I—I *am* engaged—but—I—"

"Oh! well! well!" said Apperton; "don't put yourself out of the way; we shall be very glad to see you. Mrs. Apperton and I of course are delighted to receive any friend of the family."

"You are very kind," said Somerford, who concluded that he had now made the discovery, that Kate was on a visit to this Mr. Apperton and his wife, and that they were at *their* house to be joined by the rest of the Maxwell family. —"If I can get off my engagement, I shall have great pleasure; and pray, how is Mousetrap?"

"Just the same as ever," said Apperton "constantly grumbling, complaining of every body, smoking cigars, drinking gin-and-water, and finding fault with all the world who do not follow his example."

"And his reverend brother?" said Somerford.

"He of Fudley-cum-Pipes?" said Apperton,

"alive and merry : it was he who made me a Benedict."

Another squeeze of Somerford's arm from Kate startled him. He had heard nothing in the conversation that required such an illustration, for it appeared to him that nothing upon earth could be more entirely a matter of indifference, as far as he was concerned, than the matrimonial proceedings of his newly-found friend and companion.

They had now reached home, and after another tender inquiry about her health, Somerford quitted Kate, who, more dead than alive, proceeded up-stairs to her room. Apperton and Somerford stood on the steps of the doors of their respective houses, which joined, and several observations with regard to the weather and the times, and the sea and the Downs, and the environs of Brighton, and the tediousness of long voyages, were exchanged, after which, Apperton entered his dwelling, and Somerford, full of happiness, (clouded, it must be confessed, by the mysterious conduct of his beloved,) proceeded to take another stroll; having, in departing, pledged himself to be at Mr. Apperton's punctually at seven, at which late hour, for them, the dinner was fixed, to accommodate the

coming guests; and rejoicing in an opportunity of first meeting Maxwell on his return, in a mixed party, where there would be none of that shyness or restraint which a *tête-a-tête*, after so long an absence, might naturally be expected to produce, under the peculiar circumstances of their last separation.

CHAPTER IV.

Are then the joys of this bless'd meeting dash'd
So soon, so soon will fortune snatch this from me,
And mock my vain embrace? Thus like one
Who in a dream of mighty toil and labour,
Strives to embrace some visionary form;
Just as he seems to clasp the lovely object
It slides away and vanishes to air;
So I, who thro' opposing difficulties
Have cut my tedious way to thy lov'd arms,
At length am disappointed, and but see thee
To take my last farewell. Oh! slipp'ry state
Of human pleasures, fleet and volatile,
Given us and snatched again in one short moment,
To mortify our hopes and edge our sufferings.

TRAPP.

IT is clear that things could not long remain as they were at the moment when Charles and Katharine parted to meet again at dinner. It was past two o'clock; the Maxwells had already reached Hatt's house at Merstham (so the landlord of the Jolliffe Arms is actually named); the unhappy bride had thrown herself upon her bed in an agony of grief; Apperton

had seated himself in the drawing-room, and was reading the Brighton Gazette; and Somerford, somewhat mystified, had gone to join his yellow friend, Macleod, on the Marine Parade.

Somerford, it must be confessed, was a good deal puzzled at the restraint under which it was evident Kate laboured—her tears, her agitation, the mention of her wretchedness, confounded him; and when he found himself alone, he thought still more of her manner and the matter of her conversation. It was evident to him, that she was the visitor of Mr. Apperton and his wife, to whom the gentleman had several times referred during their walk; but he could not imagine, unless the lady was extraordinarily fascinating, what inducement Kate could have for an association with a person so vulgar, so coarse, and so abrupt in his manner, as our friend the stockbroker; little dreaming that he had already beheld the Mrs. Apperton of whom his new friend had spoken; and still less imagining that *he*, the coarse, vulgar, and abrupt, was actually the husband, of his o' n dear, delicate, amiable, and accomplished Kate.

But if his mind was thus filled with chaotic visions, what must have been the state of poor Mrs. Apperton, who, throughout the whole of her interview and conversation with Somerford

had not the courage to confess her own infidelity to him—an infidelity which, however glaringly apparent, and however destructive to his happiness, was in fact the work of her father. A thousand times had she wondered why Charles had totally relinquished writing; and in the earlier years of his sojourn in India, she mentioned her surprise that he should have entirely neglected them: but to none of these wonderings, or even questions, did she get any thing like a satisfactory explanation or reply from her parent. After her mother's death, as far as Kate knew, all communication ceased between her father and Somerford; and if any thing could have been inferred from the manner in which he spoke of him, before he left off speaking of him at all, it was that he had turned out ill, and that if he had not positively disgraced himself abroad, at least no good was ever to be expected from him.

It was under impressions so received, that she had taught herself obedience to her father's wishes, with respect to Apperton. She had forced herself to believe ill of Charles, because she had heard nothing from him; and the tone given to her thoughts by the insinuations of Maxwell, unfortunately according with her own sense of personal neglect and offended pride,

she tacitly agreed to the compact by which she was enjoined never to mention Charles's name; and although the recollection of him was indelibly stamped upon her heart, she suffered her principle of duty to gain the mastery of love, and conceded to filial obedience the dearest hope of her existence.

Imagine then what *her* feelings must have been when, in less than three days after the final destruction of all these hopes, she beheld the long lost, long loved Somerford, returned to his native country, promoted, enriched, and placed by circumstances in a situation where he might reasonably, prudently, and fairly demand the hand of Maxwell's daughter; for Kate did not know, even then, that there was an obstacle beyond his former want of fortune, which Maxwell, full of pride and prejudice, never could have surmounted, and which stood in the way of his marriage with Kate. This, I say, she did not know, and therefore were her grief and remorse, her sorrow and repentance, far beyond the power of endurance. When the real truth came to her Charles's knowledge—when he, ardent and affectionate as he was, constant as the dial to the sun, who had hastened across the great world of waters to claim the hand of her whose heart he thought his own, the very

first moment that he was enabled by circumstances to do so—when he should discover that *she* had played him false, and married another, what would his feelings be—how would he despise, contemn her!—they never could meet again. How could she confess to him the conduct of her father?—how could she endure the sight of that father, now she fully comprehended his conduct? What was to be done?—the hours were flying—the time would come—Charles would be amongst them, still hoping, still loving, still perhaps undeceived.—Could she write to him—could she explain, in a short letter, what she dared not trust herself to utter?—should she leave it until her brother arrived, and make him the channel of communication?

All these conflicting doubts and fears added to the repentance that she had not at once declared the whole of the circumstances to her husband, the moment she knew who their neighbour was, racked her brain, and so agitated her whole frame, that a series of hysteric and fainting fits was the consequence; and Apperton, who had been summoned to her room, recommended some hartshorn and water and a little scent, assuring himself and her that she would be much better in an hour or two; and, as he did not expect her father till late,

seeing that he could only have received their summons at breakfast-time, she might indulge herself in sleep, which would restore her, and make her as well as ever.

Whatever sort of speculator our friend Apperton might have been in 'Change Alley, or however skilful in bleeding bulls and physicking bears, it was very evident that ministering to a mind diseased was out of his line; nor, being himself one of those iron men who never know what illness means, did he relish the care of an invalid, or the necessary stillness of a sick-room; confiding, therefore, his wife to the guardianship of her maid, Alsop, who, having lived with her four or five years, he presumed, must know her constitution perfectly, he proceeded to walk off his anxiety and gain an appetite for his brill and roasted mutton, for which dainties he had stipulated as part of his dinner.

When he was gone, or rather as soon as his wretched bride was conscious of his absence, she found herself attended by Alsop, who was bathing her temples and chafing her hands. The poor creature was terrified at her mistress's appearance, for during the whole period of her service under her, she had never seen such indications of deep feeling or violent passion:

she used to cite her young lady as an example of placid evenness of temper, not to be paralleled; but here she beheld her almost delirious, and in agonies, the source or cause of which she felt she dared not breathe. She at length begged to be left alone—and the maid unwillingly consented to leave her; for although, of course, she was unable to account for the terrible effect produced upon her mistress, she was quite convinced that it was not wise or prudent to quit her altogether; lest, as she afterwards said, she should lay violent hands on herself. Such is the force of feeling and of passion, which overcome the mild and quiet amongst women—the laugher and the cryer of every day society feel little though they exercise their feelings constantly; but the placid, modest, unassuming, gentle female, who, not easily excited, nor generally pleased, who fixes her whole affection upon one dear object, and lives in silence on the recollection of his love, when the storm of passion comes, suffers, as Katharine Maxwell did at this moment—when her heart, torn by duty, love, grief, remorse, and anger, that she had been deluded and deceived, for the first time in her life, beat with something dreadfully like resentment against her parent.

Something was to be done, she felt it would be impossible for her to suffer Charles to hear of her marriage, unaccompanied by her justification—she knew their meeting after he did know of it was impossible. What then?—she should never see him again, and he would leave her eternally, with the conviction on his mind, that she was a fickle, heartless, worthless jilt.

One resource alone was left—a few lines would put him in possession of the fact: it had occurred to her before, but ought she, the wife of another, write to the beloved of her heart, separated as she was for ever from him?—yes, in vindication of her conduct. But how to get her note conveyed?—a confidence must be reposed in her maid, and that too in the first week of the honey-moon. She would be the messenger, the go-between, and this she could not suffer her to be, without condescending to an explanation of all the foregone circumstances, in order to justify the measure to herself, and induce the woman to make herself a party to her mistress's contrivances. Could she do *that*?—could she debase herself to ask a favour of her menial, and bind that menial to secrecy—to open her heart to her inferior, who possessed no one quality to excite confidence or interest?—

She hesitated—trembled at the thought—resolved rather to let the worst occur than take this damning step; and having so resolved, proceeded to her writing-desk, and scrawled the hateful lines, which were to announce to Charles her own falsehood, and his unhappiness.

She felt herself, for the first time in her life, a guilty creature; the very rattling of the door alarmed her—the sound of what she thought her husband's voice terrified her—she hastily closed the desk—all was silent—again it was opened, and, almost blinded with her tears, again she began her letter. The door of the room opened suddenly, and Apperton stood before her; the letter, of which two or three lines were written, lay on the table—she dared not snatch it to conceal it—she sat motionless, and almost senseless—she then resolved to explain the whole of the circumstances to Apperton. He, however, did not take the trouble to approach the table where the letter lay; but having asked Kate how she felt herself, informed her, upon hearing that she was a little better, that he had met a city friend during his walk, and had invited him to come and dine; for, added he, when there's victuals enough for six there's enough for seven, so one does a civil thing with-

out much cost. "He is a very lively pleasant fellow," added Apperton, "and very fond of a song; so if our neighbour brings in his flute, you and they may make up some harmony, to please the old gentleman."

This speech gave time to Kate to collect herself, and with an air of indifference as to the writing, she replaced the beginning of her letter to Charles in the desk and closed it. Her answer to the proposition of her husband was neither clear nor intelligible, and she saw with pleasure his departure again, under a promise to return by five, if *she* would promise to keep herself quiet till that time.

Apperton went—but it was doomed that his absence should have as little effect as his presence, upon the work which Katharine had in hand. Scarcely had she resumed her paper and pen, and was endeavouring to express herself so as to wound her Somerford as little as possible, when Alsop abruptly bounced into the room and put a letter into her hands. It came, she believed, from next door—from the gentleman who was to dine with them.

"Leave it," said Kate,—"leave it—go—leave *me*."

Alsop did as she was desired, but certainly

somewhat more enlightened as to the cause of her mistress's sudden illness than she previously had been; the size of the letter proclaimed that it must be something more than a mere answer to a dinner invitation, and it came from a gentleman of whom her mistress, the night before, professed to know nothing—sudden affair, especially considering how lately her mistress had been married. All these "considerations," added to the words "devil of a blow up," which Captain Somerford's English servant had whispered in her ear as he delivered the said letter into her hand, set Miss, or Mrs. (I will not pretend to say which it was) Alsop into the mind for "finding out;" her organs of inquisitiveness, like those of all domestics, were as big as walnuts, and they swelled preternaturally whenever her master or mistress left any point under discussion to be discovered; accordingly, Mrs. Alsop divided her time between listening at the bed-room door and peeping through the keyhole while her mistress read the Captain's letter, and going herself to "fetch a little hot water," or something of that sort, out of the kitchen of the Captain's house, where she might encounter the Captain's servant and obtain a little more

illumination as to his mysterious announcement of a domestic explosion.

It was some time before Kate could muster courage to open the fatal letter—the superscription told the dreadful truth—Charles was aware of her inconstancy, for the packet was addressed to Mrs. Apperton. This seemed, amidst all her agony of grief, to relieve her mind—he knew the worst—the blow had been inflicted, and not by her hand. Again and again she essayed to reach the dreaded appeal, until at length, with one desperate effort, she seized it, and tearing it open, read as follows:—

"It was natural that you should have been unable to tell me yourself—and I am glad that it was not from *your* lips I heard it—that I have lived to hear it at all, is my bitterest misfortune. Oh, Kate! if it were possible for you to know my heart—to appreciate its devotion, its unqualified, undivided love for you, you would better understand my feelings at a moment, when years of toil, of danger, and of hope, are repaid by intelligence, than which, the most painful of deaths, would to me have been less afflicting. I do not seek to wound your feelings or harass your gentle nature—

some art, some treachery must have been practised upon you, to have effected this terrible change in your feelings and affection. I must, however, vindicate myself from an imputation of neglectfulness, even though the truth should implicate others in a charge of duplicity.

" I was commanded by your father to abstain from writing to you ; it was on the condition that I ceased to correspond with you, that he permitted me to hope for eventual happiness; one of his letters is now before me, and there he says, ' Let her affections take their natural course, and if she remain firm to the feelings which you tell me you believe she entertains towards you, when you return, I may *then* be inclined to listen to your proposals, although I neither bind myself to do so, nor even give you hopes of ultimate success with her. The affections of the boy may wear off with time; and since you are as likely to change your views of happiness as she may be, I think it most conducive to the comfort of both of you, to dissipate at once the idea of any thing like an engagement.'

" Surely, Kate, you must have been aware of this letter—you must have been told the nature of the test by which our affections

were to be tried. Oh! when I reflect upon the days that are gone—when fainting under the heat of climate, and the fatigues of service, I have called to mind that voice and those features which I so longed to hear and to gaze upon, and have felt cheered and inspired in the fulfilment of my most arduous duties, by the hope —the one bright hope of my life—to deserve the consent of your father to our union. When I recollect the delight I experienced when chance, or as I considered, Providence, had given me a considerable prize in the Calcutta lottery, in addition to the prize-money I received for the successful attack and capture of a fort, in which treasure to a large amount was concealed; the joy —the agony of pleasure I felt when I reckoned myself master of that, which would purchase my promotion and make me worthy of you,—my sorrow and my disappointment are now more grievous.

"Far be it from me to complain of the inscrutable decrees of that Being to whom my prayers for the happiness of my Kate have been daily offered up ever since I left her; but how much less of sorrow should I have endured, if I had never risen from the bed of sickness on which for weeks and months I lay extended! Then I clung to life with earnestness, and prayed

to be restored—for what? to see the object of all my hopes and wishes married to another. But as if to make this blow more dreadful, look at the points of time connected with the event; if instead of staying at the Cape for three months, I had proceeded home at all hazards, I might have yet saved myself from misery—nay, if we had not been delayed a week at St. Helena beyond the period we expected, I should still have been in England before your marriage. There is a fate in this, and I, wretch that I am, must submit.

"When this reaches you I shall be on my road to London; I have left orders for my servant to follow me in the evening. For me to have remained near you, to have seen you again, would have been impossible; to meet your father after what has passed, at all events so soon after the heavy blow has fallen, would be painful and useless. It is in vain for me to doubt that he always had some fixed objection to me beyond my want of fortune—an objection incompatible as it seems to me, with his long and ancient friendship with my father. My mother once or twice, when wounded and offended by his conduct after my father's death, seemed inclined to explain to me the nature of that

objection, for she was aware of it; but whatever it may be, her feelings always overcame her when she made the effort to inform me. Her death, during my absence, renders it impossible I should ever know from her; and what has occurred in your family, makes it highly improbable that I should ever come to any explanation with them.

"In the hurried whirl of passion and feeling under which I labour, I can form no settled plan of proceeding. I have now no tie to England. I have no relation that I know of,—and now you are all lost to me—no friends—oh! what a blank, what a desart is my country!—I stand alone in the multitude—spurned by the friend of my father, and rejected by her who was dearer to me than my life.

"I had collected for you, Kate, all, all for you—some jewels of no great value; but rare, I believe, in this country—on which I have gazed a thousand times, and fancied them worn by you—which you alone must possess; but I suppose the customs of society render your acceptance of them now improper;—be it so—short will be the period before the gift may be received without apprehension. What I have endured within the three last hours, will effect that, which the

climate of India, and the severe fatigue I have undergone, have failed to accomplish. When I am dead, Kate, there can be no impropriety in your receiving my poor present as a legacy. Look at those jewels sometimes, and think of the once happy companion of your youth—of him, who lived but for you, and whose hopes, whose happiness, whose existence, were sacrificed to the cruelty of those who made you false.

" It will be impossible, as indeed it would be unworthy to conceal any of the facts connected either with my attachment to you, or our meeting here to day, from your father or friends. They and you may rely upon it, that I shall never further intrude myself. My feelings towards you are such, that I could not meet and associate with you on terms of mere friendship; the depth of my affection, and the bitterness of my disappointment prevent it. The course for me to pursue is clear and plain. Religion and morality point the way, and I shall follow it—the struggle is now to be made. I could not trust myself to see you—that would have been too much to bear. In this way only could I summon courage to abandon all my earthly expectations and comfort. My heart aches to its very centre, my head burns with

fever, my eyes stream with tears, while I sign the doom of my own wretchedness. It is a duty I owe to you, and to those who now alone must be dear to you. Farewell, Kate—farewell for ever!—the blessing of heaven be upon you! pity and pardon me if I have ever offended you, and accept the forgiveness of one, who ignorant as he is of the circumstances which have operated on your mind, and led to what has occurred, cannot but attribute to others the conduct which has sealed his wretchedness. Farewell!' C. S.

This letter it would have been the height of indelicacy, not to speak of a breach of confidence in me, to have laid before the reader, if if it had been seen by nobody but the writer, and her to whom it was addressed; but Kate having, when she had read it, fallen into a fit, from which she recovered only to relapse, and then sink in a state of insensibility on the bed, Mrs. Alsop took the liberty before she applied any remedy or restorative to her mistress, to read every word of it too; after which it underwent a similar perusal by Mr. Apperton himself, who, when he returned, found his unhappy wife fallen into a slumber, produced by the

violence of her agitation, and some mixture which her maid had administered to her, in which it was clear the soothing influence of opium had not been wanting.

The sentiments and feelings which the epistle excited in the bosoms of the two persons who had perused it, were, as it might be supposed, tolerably powerful, although entirely different in their nature. To the maid, it was an enlightenment for which she had been in some degree prepared, by the hints of Captain Somerford's servant, and the perturbation of her mistress, whom she forthwith denounced, in Godfrey Moss's pronunciation, "a sly cretur," for not having made her a confidante, although her maid now of five or six years standing; but to Apperton it opened an entirely new scene—it exhibited a vista of matrimonial *happiness* which he by no means had anticipated, while the allusion to the elder Maxwell's duplicity, coupled with his cordial anxiety to conclude the match between him and Kate, gave a new character to his warmth and cordiality, and established the stockbroker, in his own mind, as a sort of stop-gap, who, so far from having excited a flame in the bosom of the young lady, had been rather used as an extinguisher to put one

out, which had been burning there for some time previous.

Unconscious as he was that Mrs. Alsop had had the benefit of enlightening herself from the same source, Apperton began to calculate how he should act upon the knowledge he had so very uncomfortably acquired. If he admitted that he had become acquainted with what was evidently a family secret, and which had most assiduously been kept from his knowledge, he knew enough of the world, and its ways, to know that he ought to feel (and express his feeling too) extremely angry at the line of conduct which old Maxwell had adopted towards him ; because although it may form no part of a parent's duty to furnish his daughter's lover with a list of the former candidates for her favour, still, the extreme caution which hindered even the slightest reference to his name and connexion, with the *ruse* by which the correspondence between the young people had been cut short, preyed upon his mind ; and, laying down the letter exactly where he found it, he retired from the apartment hastily, and told Mrs. Alsop, (whom he had already wrongfully metamorphosed into a cunning *intriguante*, and a faithful confidante of his wife,)

that her mistress was asleep, and that he would return in half an hour, thinking it better not to disturb her.

As he descended the steps of the house door, purposing to walk off his mortification, and ruminate upon his difficulties in the fresh air, he beheld Captain Somerford's servant, piling on a wheel-barrow, divers and sundry packages, in the very act of emigrating from Brighton: an exhibition which gladdened his eyes, and cheered his heart; for not only did it give appearance of his rival's departure, but authenticated, as far as it went, his promises and intentions contained in the letter to Kate.

The servant having put nearly the finishing stroke to his packing, touched his hat to Apperton, and delivered him a note, which was intended to have been the whole portion of the correspondence which was to be subjected to his inspection; he took it, and opened it, and found the following lines:—

"Captain Somerford presents his compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Apperton, regrets that business of an urgent nature, which calls him to London immediately, will prevent his having the honour of dining with them to-day."

"I am very sorry," said Apperton, mechanically, in the hearing of the servant; "and the captain is gone?"

"He went off, sir, at half-past three," said the servant; "I follow him by the night coach, sir."

"To London?" said Apperton—thinking it a good plan to get as much information as possible, in order to compare his acts with his intentions, and so form a standard by which he might regulate his reliance upon all the promises contained in his farewell epistle.

"Yes, sir, to London," replied the man; "to Ibbotson's Hotel, in Vere Street, Cavendish Square."

Apperton was puzzled whether to "part friends," as the boys say, and send his compliments to the captain, and express his regret at not seeing him, which he most assuredly did not feel; human nature prevailed, and he walked off, grumbling to himself.

And now, who amongst us is there, who would not have grumbled, under similar circumstances? To a strongly sensitive mind, such a discovery as Apperton had made, would have produced a storm of contending passion and feeling, which it would have required not a little to calm or

allay. Apperton, in less than ten minutes, balanced the uncomfortable part of his case in the opposite scale, to the advantages derivable from his securing the person and fortune of his wife, and the controul and influence which the connexion gave him over her father's property. As *he* stood in the world, and with his views and passions, there was scarcely any indignity which he would not have suffered, out of the money market, to carry his points in it; and after summing up in his mind a thousand different speculations, and a thousand different schemes, he determined to put his pride and indignation into his pocket, affect to believe in the excuse of Captain Somerford, never acknowledge to having seen the letter he had written to Kate, and to attribute his wife's indisposition to the sun, the sea, the air, or the water, or indeed, to any thing except that, which it truly arose from.

It was clear by this mode of proceeding, that he should not only escape a serious discussion with Maxwell, which might terminate in an open rupture, and general separation of the parties, but he would also escape the imputation of having read his wife's letter; and he satisfied himself, now that her swain was gone, all would go on well again; and having formed his

opinion of women upon certain specimens of the sex with which he had become familiar in his earlier days, he felt assured that Kate would say nothing about what had passed, but, depositing the epistle of her once loved Somerford in her writing-desk, meet her family at dinner, as calm, as cool, and as collected as if nothing had happened. Whether he had formed a just estimate of his wife's feelings and sincerity, we may perhaps hereafter discover. His notion was, to use his own expression, that she would "take it coolly," as a sister-in-law of his own once did, when her lover was locked up in a china closet for seven hours, during which her husband dined, drank his wine with his wife, discussed his tea and toast, sipped his brandy and water, smoked his pipe, and retired to rest; —and right anxious he was that the whole affair might blow over in a similar manner.

In the mean time Kate was slowly recovering from the effect of her agitation and the dose, whatever it was, with which her careful attendant had plied her; but the sight of the fatal letter, the moment it caught her eye, as she was arousing herself from the death-like languor which had fallen over her, threw her again into strong hysterics.

It would have been vain for Alsop to deny that she had made herself mistress of its contents, during the swoon, or rather syncope, of her lady; the interest she exhibited, the soothing tenderness of manner, so marked in her conduct to Kate, proved that she was aware of the cause and origin of her distress and disorder.

"Where, where is my husband?" were the first words poor Katharine uttered.

"He has been here, ma'am," said Alsop, "and told me he should return presently; for he thought it best not to disturb you."

"Disturb—God help me!" said Kate; "when shall I rest? Oh! my heart, my heart! Did Mr. Apperton see this letter?" asked she.

"I really don't know," said Alsop, delighted at the approach to something like confidence in her. "I'm sure, if he did, ma'am, he must be too much of a gentleman to have read it."

"I don't know," said Katharine, faintly smiling; "under the circumstances, I should think him justified in doing so. Oh, and is this all reality? Have I not been dreaming some horrible dreams?"

"No, ma'am, no," said Alsop, "it's all true and real; and I'am sure, if you had seen the Captain when he went out to go away, you would have thought him mad, stark, staring mad."

"Is he gone?" said Katharine, gasping for breath.

"Went, at half-past three, to the minute, ma'am," said Alsop; "and his man is off after him, with all the luggage and parcels that came here yesterday."

"That is some relief," said Mrs. Apperton; "give me the letter, Alsop."

Alsop did as she was desired, and Kate received it with an effort at tranquillity; but it was vain: unconsciously and involuntarily she pressed the senseless folds of the envelope, as if her very existence was identified with the words it contained.

Had she but delayed her decision in favour of Apperton a few short weeks, she might have married *him* to whom her faith was plighted, and have made him happy, who in her sweet society, and under her gentle influence, would have ensured her comfort and his own honour and respectability; but uneasy and unhappy in the constant recollection of one whose name she dared not mention, and whose long silence she had been taught to construe into indifference, she relinquished the bright visions which had adorned her earlier days, and caught at a prospect of tranquil existence, which, when once the

heart's first love is blighted, is all that woman may expect to enjoy.

But when she thought of what Charles himself was suffering—Charles, upon whom the disappointment of his hopes had fallen as a thunderbolt; who, unlike her, surrounded by relations and friends, stood isolated in the world. The thoughts of home associated with her; the cheering smile of her father welcoming him in his advanced rank and improved circumstances; the kind friendship of the ingenuous Edward—all, all were lost, buried in one chaotic mass: and Somerford was thrown into the metropolis, scarcely convalescent from what had been reported a mortal illness, without one human being to minister to his wants and wishes, or cheer him in the hour of sickness and of sorrow.

"He is really gone, then," said Kate; gazing on the open space, while tears chaced each other down her pale cheeks. "Gone—where! I am better now—I can cry—my heart is easier. Oh why—why did I not see him for one minute, for one moment, to have told him I was not the heartless being — the — but perhaps it is better as it is."

"Kate, may I come in?" said Apperton,

knocking at the door, which Alsop (who had lived in a good family before she came to the Maxwells,) had previously locked.

"No, no! not for the world!" said Kate, in a hurried whisper to Alsop, "presently—say presently—oh! not now!"

Alsop assured her master that her lady was not sufficiently well to see or speak to him just yet; but that she would come down to him in the drawing-room when she was a little more recovered.

"I trust that Heaven will forgive my father for his cruelty to me," murmured Kate; "I thought that he had confidence in me; but no, his commands were not enough; he could not trust me for obedience, and so—so—Charles—poor Charles!—Oh! mercy! mercy on me!"

Here terminated the scene for the present. Kate again fell into hysterics, and again was subjected by her maid to the discipline of all the established remedies for such complaints; but Alsop was soon convinced, that any efforts of her mistress to rally, so as to present herself at table when her father should arrive, would be perfectly vain; and therefore, having tranquillized her for the moment, she descended to the drawing-room, according to her promise, to in-

form Apperton that rest was absolutely essential for her mistress, and that although she saw no immediate necessity for calling in medical assistance, she thought that she ought not to be moved or disturbed until the arrival of her father, under whose opinion and advice they ought to act as occasion should require.

The truth is, that, independently of her bodily ills, Katharine was at certain periods delirious; and Mrs. Alsop knew, by experience, that nothing in the world is so dangerous to domestic tranquillity as temporary light-headedness in the lady of a family: secrets that have been buried in the deepest holes and corners for years, are blurted out in the most unceremonious manner; and as the wary maid knew enough of her mistress's feelings to be quite sure that any violent exhibition of candour would be far from complimentary or agreeable to her husband, she wished to keep him apart from his wife, until the feverish restlessness under which she was labouring should have subsided, and the chance of his hearing any unpleasant truths relative either to himself, or any body else, should have proportionably diminished.

"What," said Apperton, "what do you think is the cause of this indisposition, Alsop?"

"Upon my word," said Alsop, "I have no kind of idea, sir. Sometimes the marine affluvia affects ladies on this coast, the air is so uncommon bracing. I have known ladies who have been unable to remain here any length of time; it may be that—you know, sir—"

"Nothing has happened to alarm or agitate her?" said Apperton.

"Not the smallest thing in life, at least as I know of," said Alsop.

"She has not told you of any thing, I mean?" said he.

"Not a syllable, sir," replied the waiting woman; "I think it might have been the prawns my mistress eat at breakfast, because I know they don't *dis*gest easy; but there's no telling, sir—the human frame is so delicate, that—but I'd better not stay away too long, sir—I'll come down again presently, and let you know, sir—I think I hear my mistress calling."

Saying which, Mrs. Alsop returned to the bed-room, the result of the conversation with her master being, his entire belief that she was ignorant of the real cause of his wife's illness, and his perfect conviction that nobody had read the letter except Kate and himself; all of which belief and conviction went to strengthen him in

the determination of stating to Maxwell the plain fact of her indisposition, in the first instance, and afterwards incidentally mentioning the recognition and invitation of Captain Somerford, leaving both to work as they might, he remaining ignorant of the cause, and consequently unsuspicious of the effects produced upon his wife.

As the evening approached, Katharine did not rally, and it was almost seven o'clock when her maid pronounced the utter impossibility of her coming down to receive her father, or even of her getting up She prescribed a huge bason of tea, and quiet; and considering she was trying the difficult experiment of ministering to the mind, perhaps that regimen was as good as any other. At all events, for the first week of a honeymoon, things did not look over lively, and Apperton had worked himself up into a little fever of his own, when a sudden change was given to the current of his thoughts by the arrival of the travelling carriage, and a thundering knock at the fragile door of the house. He was on the alert in an instant to receive his visitors, and, in a few minutes Maxwell was in the drawing-room, Ned on the top of the stairs, and Godfrey Moss,

taking his time, clambering, as he called it, crying out in a shrill, feigned voice—

"Kittums! Kittums!" as if poor Kate could smile, or run to receive him as she would have done a little week before.

The secret of her illness could not be kept from Maxwell, who, being a bit of a fatalist, had two or three times told his companions that he anticipated something disagreeable on his arrival at Brighton. This, to some people, might pass for prescience, and, being a Scotchman, might in Maxwell do duty for second sight; but it should be recollected, that, before he left London on the expedition, he was aware that the bane of his hopes, the orphan child of his friend, the discarded lover of his daughter, was not only in England, but actually at Brighton.

Maxwell was visibly and deeply affected when he heard of his child's illness; he despatched Alsop to prepare her for his visit, and Apperton's agitation, caused by a thousand contending feelings, (if his sensations may be dignified with such a name), added not a little to his anxiety and solicitude. Ned, who loved his sister fondly, and who had a thousand things to tell her about his romantic affair with Maria, was suddenly overcast with gloom, and Moss, who

anticipated that the "mutton" would be punctual to a moment at seven, sat himself down in a dark corner and grunted; and when the servant brought in candles, took an opportunity of inquiring whether the dinner was nearly ready, bidding him tell the cook to send it up whenever it was done, as those who wanted to eat, might as well have it hot; and as for those who did not, it did not signify whether it got cold upon the table, or in the kitchen.

In less than half an hour after their arrival, Alsop announced her mistress's readiness to receive her father, and Maxwell, availing himself of the permission, proceeded to the apartment, where she lay extended on her bed.

CHAPTER V.

" Take heed of pride, and curiously consider
How brittle the foundation is, on which
You labour to advance it. Niobe,
Proud of her numerous issue, durst contemn
Latona's double burthen ; but what followed ?"

MASSINGER.

" THIS is, indeed, a sad business," said Maxwell, as he re-entered the dinner parlour, where the customary meal had been in progress, under the command of Moss, and with the cordial acquiescence of Apperton, who kept aloof from the sick chamber, in order to give Katharine an opportunity, if she chose, of explaining to her father the particulars of what had occurred—" poor Kate is seriously ill."

" Ah!" said Moss, helping himself to a bumper of Port wine, his sole and sovereign remedy at dinner time for all evils. But he said it in a tone which implied, although he knew nothing of what had actually happened,

that her indisposition was "all along of her marriage with a man she did not care about."

"Is she feverish, sir?" said Apperton.

"Very," replied Maxwell; "she must be kept perfectly quiet—the agitation of her mind just at this juncture would be productive of very serious results."

"Has she seen any old acquaintance here," said Moss, "who has stirred up her feelings?"

"Moss, Moss!" said Maxwell, in a tone calculated, as he hoped, to check any further conversation of that character.

Apperton felt the blood rise into his cheeks; a sensation produced not only from the consciousness of his being privy to the whole of the affair, but from a sense of mortification that the facts connected with her early attachment were so generally known.

"Nothing to be sure could be more inopportune, or uncomfortable:" said Maxwell; "however, there are little worries in life which must be endured, and let us hope, overcome; she'll be better in a day or two;—Apperton, a glass of wine."

"With all my heart, sir," said Apperton; "I'll drink to Kate's speedy recovery."

"With all *my* heart," said Maxwell.

And in this sort of broken, desultory manner the colloquy was maintained, while the servants were necessarily present; but it was clear that Maxwell was fraught with matter of more importance, and that he was only waiting for an opportunity to unburthen his mind to his son-in-law: who, on the other hand, fondly hoped that his father-in-law would suffer him to remain in ignorance of the facts of the case, none of which he pretended to know. Apperton sat half trembling at every turn in the conversation, convinced, in his own small mind, that his wife would never be so silly as to confess to her father that her indisposition was the result of an interview with a person whose correspondence he had interdicted, and a connexion with whom he had so decidedly declined.

But Apperton knew little of the innate purity of the being to whom he was united. The savage possessor of gold could not be more ignorant of the intrinsic value of his property, than was the stockbroker, of the worth of his exemplary and ill-fated wife. Her first impulse was to relieve her heart of a weight of woe and self-reproach by detailing minutely to her father all that had occurred. At first, he felt angry with Somerford; then, as the circumstances of

their accidental meeting developed themselves, he softened into something like pity for his disappointment, and approbation of her honourable conduct;—he blamed not his daughter's first concealment of her acquaintance with his name when she saw it, or rather heard Apperton repeat it; when he read his letter, which Katharine gave him, he seemed agitated with conflicting feelings and passions; the exposure of his own duplicity naturally irritated him, although in Kate's state of health and spirits he did not suffer his anger to appear; but in conclusion, when, in the fullness and bitterness of her remorse for having, as she said, heedlessly accepted Apperton, she wept at her own infidelity, Maxwell bade her console herself for, said he, "had you remained for ever single, and Somerford had returned laden with all the wealth of the empire from which he comes, he never should have been your husband with *my* consent. If," added he, "this truth can relieve you from any regrets on that point, believe your father. There is an objection in my mind, so strong against an alliance with him, that although the son of a man with whom I once was upon terms of the closest intimacy, and for whom, I may add, I felt, at one period

of my life, almost a brotherly affection, I never could have received him as a son-in-law.

The consolation, as Maxwell thought it, which Kate was to derive from this violent opposition of her father to Charles, was considerably qualified by the stigma which it seemed to affix upon the character or qualities of one who never could cease to be dear to her; and when her father had made this declaration, she entreated him to speak no more on the subject. The die was cast—her fate was fixed; and by the strengthening aid of religion, and the exercise of those principles in which she had been brought up, she would truly and faithfully fulfil the vows she had plighted at the altar; "But oh!" added she, "do not, do not seek to alleviate my regrets by deteriorating from the character of my poor lost Charles. Ease, comfort, happiness, obtained by lowering *him* in my estimation, by destroying the bright vision I have formed of his excellence and his future eminence, would be to me but little worth. No, my father; Charles Somerford is all honour, all goodness, and all truth! That he is nothing to me, takes not from that goodness, nor can it blind me to his virtues; but I am not so entirely selfish—not so thoroughly worldly—but

I can look on what I have lost, with the same eye of admiration and affection, separated from the tender feelings with which they were once blended, and apart from those sentiments which I myself solemnly renounced, when I pledged my faith as a wife to another."

"Kate," said her father, "you are a kind, excellent girl. At this moment, to argue, to speak on the subject of Somerford, would be idle and cruel. Your fever and general disorder, are the natural results of high excitement and powerful agitation, and to endeavour to stem the current of your feelings would be madness. As far as all that duty demands, I need never speak to my child. For the past, time alone can do the work. Believe me, Kate, that what I say with respect to Somerford, I say merely in the hope of reconciling you to what has occurred, and with no view of lowering him in your estimation. Of this you will perhaps be convinced, when I tell you that, insuperable as was my objection to him as a son-in-law, it arises from events over which he could have had no controul, and which implicate neither his personal honour nor his individual character."

It was after the conversation of which I have given this brief abstract, that Maxwell went

down to the dinner parlour; whence, after having hastily partaken of the fare, he again returned to Kate's room. Shortly after, at her desire, he sent a message to Edward, desiring his attendance, his sister having expressed a wish to see him. Moss, however, was not included in the invitation, because Maxwell was certain he would begin upon the only subject which it was their chief anxiety to avoid; and as Moss, who never liked Apperton much, now liked him less, he resolved not to subject himself to a *tête-a-tête* with *him*, and accordingly finding that he was excluded from the cabinet, he wrapped himself up in his well-furred cloak, and, spite of the darkness and cold, neither of which well "suited his complaint," he betook himself to the house of an ancient friend of his, who greatly sympathized with him in an affection for cigars and hot gin-and-water, and where he knew he could indulge in his passion with impunity; Moss, moreover, not at all liking the "house of mourning," and preferring, as speedily as his legs would permit him, to exchange the "doleful dumps" at Maxwell's, (where he found himself not "called in," and rather thought himself "left out,") for the society of his convivial crony in the vicinity of the Steyne.

Off he went, getting what he called "a sniff

of the briney," on his way along the cliff, and leaving word that he should be in by ten; thereby implying that he should be only temporarily absent, and by naming the hour, marking his confidence and belief that supper, so generally adopted at Maxwell's in London, would not be relinquished in his residence on the coast.

There are a vast number of ways of making the agreeable in society, and several of these pleasant knacks did Godfrey Moss himself possess; but the mode he this afternoon adopted happened to be unconsciously, as far as he was himself concerned, the most acceptable that he could possibly have hit upon; and it was one which many other vastly charming people might perhaps occasionally try with equal success. I mean that of walking himself off. Maxwell felt conscious that, after what had occurred in the course of the day, Apperton would expect (as indeed he ought to have) some explanation of the circumstances under which Katharine and Somerford had been so strongly affected by the sight of each other, as well as of the precise nature of the acquaintance and connexion which had formerly subsisted between them.

Maxwell, although conscious of the pro-

priety and necessity of making this explanation, was equally conscious that it would be impossible to put his design into execution in the presence of Moss, who would be sure to keep up a sort of running commentary, by glass, voice, and snuff-box, upon all that his friend, the surgeon, might advance in elucidation of the unpleasant events of the forenoon; therefore, when he retired to the dinner-room, full of his object, and anxious to set things to rights, but with all the dread of Godfrey's burlesque and sarcasm before his eyes, his satisfaction may easily be imagined, when he found the coast clear, and Apperton alone, sitting gazing at the fire, and seeing in the glowing embers the brilliant chambers of the teeming mines, of which he was so extensive a shareholder, and longing for the return of his father-in-law from his wife's room, in order to hear, not as a very tender husband in the first week of the honeymoon ought to have wished, how his beloved Kate was going on; but what truth there was, in the account of the failure of a second banking-house in the city, of which the rumour had the day before reached Brighton, and what, if possible, was the price of the North Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company's shares at the last quotation.

The reverie of the stockbroker terminated, and Maxwell joined him.

"Kate," said Maxwell, "I am glad to say, is better; she must remain quiet, and I hope a few days will set her to rights again—Moss is gone, I see."

"He is gone on a visit to a friend," said Apperton; "he found me dull, I suppose; I am not in a very conversible humour upon general topics, I confess."

"That is not very surprising, Apperton," said Maxwell; "I can perfectly understand, and entirely appreciate your feelings."

"Pray," said Apperton, "did you hear before you left town whether it is true that Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown, have stopped?"

"I did not hear," said Maxwell.

"Did my clerk send you the list of share-prices up to twelve to-day, as I wrote word?" said Apperton.

"No," said Maxwell, "I only saw yesterday's list."

"Dear heart, how provoking!" said Apperton. "I wanted so much to know, because I could have written to night, to direct him what to do at the office—I think I shall be obliged to go up to town in the morning."

Maxwell, whose sense of honour was extremely strong, and whose perception was amazingly acute, saw, in this little conversation with Apperton, not only a desire on his part to evade any thing like explanation with him on the subject of Somerford, but a determination to call his rival immediately to account for his conduct, and perhaps subsequently to make the acknowledged affection which Kate and Charles had so distinctly avowed, the ground-work of a separation from his newly-acquired wife.

That Maxwell was never more mistaken in his life, the reader, who has seen Apperton through a much clearer medium, than bundles of bonds, shares, and scrip, will easily believe; of attachments, except legal ones, Apperton knew little; and as for calling out, it was a term to which he never would have applied any meaning, except as relating to the noisy proclamation of names by the porters of the stock exchange, as the jobbers and brokers who belong to the house happen to be wanted by their uninitiated customers outside.

Maxwell, who had established his son-in-law in his mind as a paragon of excellence, thought he had fathomed his intentions, and anticipated the character of his expedition to London.

"Apperton," said Maxwell, "I am not to be told that what you have just said is meant as an honourable disguise to your real feelings and views at this crisis—you have no anxiety about the stopping of banking-houses, nor any care as to buying and selling of shares."

"What have I done, sir," said Apperton, "to justify such an opinion of me?—have I ever neglected your business, or that of any other client? (in these times shoemakers, and coach-makers, and tailors, and all the rest of the handicraftsmen of the metropolis call their customers, clients; excepting always the wealthy bankers, who call their customers—customers, and their shops—shops.) "I do assure you, that if 'Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown' have stopped, it will be a very serious thing for a great many of us, and it must be looked to; and as for selling the shares, Mr. Maxwell, of course I should not sell any of yours without advice; but I see no use in holding, if they happen to tumble."

"Assure yourself, Apperton," said Maxwell, "that I never meant to undervalue your qualities as a man of business—my confidence in you has been practically evinced—all I possess in the world I have placed at your dis-

posal, and under your management; that of itself is a sufficient proof of *my* opinion; but I know the world and human nature, and I know that it is impossible for you to reflect upon the occurrences of this day, before our arrival here, without feelings of a most acute nature, and which it will require a clear and candid explanation on my part to heal and moderate."

"How, sir!" said Apperton, still adhering to his plan of ignorance—a system which upon most points he would have found incomparably successful; "I know of nothing particular that has happened, except, indeed, this sudden indisposition of Kate's, which, as you say she will soon be better, I conclude is not very serious or important."

"Not the illness itself," said Maxwell; "that might not, as it need not, alarm or agitate you, but the cause of it cannot fail, I think, to excite some unpleasant sensations."

"Cause!" said Apperton; "I'm sure, sir, I am not to blame. I—if the sea air, or the bracing nature of the atmosphere, or the—"

"Come, come," said Maxwell, "we had better meet the question fairly and honourably. The arrival of Captain Somerford so inoppor-

tunely at this place, is indeed a circumstance very much to be regretted."

"I think his sudden departure more so," said Apperton, "for he had promised to dine here to day, which, as an old friend of your's and her's, as Kate told me he was, I invited him to do; but he wrote me word that he was hurried to London upon particular business, and so could not come to us."

"You surely did not expect that he would come," said Maxwell, "when he became aware of the nature of your connexion with my daughter."

"Oh! I don't know any thing about that," said Apperton.

"Not know!" said Maxwell; "why, Apperton, you do not mean to plead ignorance of the fact that my daughter's affections as a girl —a child almost—were fixed upon Somerford, and that I objected to him on certain points; and that although the son of a particular friend, I procured him a commission in a regiment on foreign service, in order to break off the intercourse with my family?"

"Indeed," said Apperton, "I—I didn't know —that is, I—"

"Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who was all

candour himself, and could not endure shuffling in others, "you carry this too far. If you have an intention of proceeding to extremities with this young gentleman, which I must say, whatever your feelings may be, would be highly unjustifiable and unwarrantable, your attempt to blind me by a denial of even a suspicion of facts with which you are perfectly well acquainted, is childish and absurd. If you are determined, for no earthly reason but revenge, as it seems to me, to imbrue your hands in the blood of an honourable and high-spirited young soldier, of course I have no controul over your actions; but, at the same time, I cannot but protest against such a line of proceeding, and, above all, I must deprecate the mode in which you evade the explanation I am ready to give you, by a denial of that which is already self-evident."

"I deny nothing," said Apperton; "I'm not going to imbrue my hands in anybody's blood; I have no quarrel—no cause of quarrel with Captain Somerford, who, besides being a friend of yours, seems to me to be a remarkably nice, spruce, genteel young man; and as for fighting anybody because he does not choose to dine with me, I'll leave it to any two of the

best men on the stock-exchange to say whether that 's necessary."

" Still," said Maxwell, " you treat jestingly what I know must weigh deeply on your mind. The letter which Captain Somerford addressed to your wife is the document to which I refer; you there saw the explanation of the writer, and his allusions to my conduct in the affair; it is *my* explanation upon those points that you shall now receive."

" Letter!" said Apperton, " did Captain Somerford write a letter to Kate? I——"

" Stop, stop, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell; " recollect yourself—you *know* he wrote a letter to my daughter."

" To *me* a note," said Apperton, still shirking and shifting. " I have got it in my pocket —here it is; I have jotted down the posting money from town on the back of it."

" I mean no such thing," said Maxwell; " I mean the letter in which Somerford takes his leave of Kate for ever, and which you have read."

" I," said Apperton; " what—that—I—"

" Good God! Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who began to believe that his evasions were but for the purpose of covering his very chivalrous

designs; "I mean the letter which you read—the letter which my daughter gave *me* to read the moment I arrived, as the best and fullest explanation she could afford of what had occurred in the family."

"Oh," said Apperton, "Kate told you, did she? Oh! I *did* see a letter, but I did not know,—and I should not have mentioned it if she had not, because it is no good making a disturbance, and when a thing is done, it cannot be undone; and the offer of the jewels was very handsome, and I—yes—yes—I recollect now—I did——"

"And did you think so ill," said Maxwell, "of the daughter I have educated, and the woman you have married, as to believe that she would conceal from me or from yourself such a circumstance as the receipt of such a letter from such a quarter; you must have indeed underrated not only the qualities of my child, but of every living woman of worth or character. In *her* case, concealment only could make her guilty."

"Why," said Apperton, rather pertly, "I did not know what she might like to do as regards *you*, because the day Captain Somerford landed, and when I saw his name on a trunk,

and mentioned it to her, she did not acknowledge him as an acquaintance, or seem indeed as if she had ever even heard of him before."

"That she has told me also," said Maxwell; "but there is a vast difference between not acknowledging an acquaintance which is at an end, and which it was at that moment certainly not her intention to renew; and receiving a serious appeal from a former lover, with whom, contrary to all expectation, she was brought into immediate contact."

"I am sure," said Apperton, "I am all for quiet, and I am very happy as I am; and I think the Captain has behaved very liberally, and very like a gentleman; but I cannot help saying, that it vexes me to find that Kate was induced to accept me, when, as everything now shows, she was still hankering after him."

"Hankering!" said Maxwell, looking at Apperton as if he could have annihilated him. "Hankering is an inapplicable word, Sir; my daughter, under my counsel, and at my desire, had banished Captain Somerford from her heart and recollection; he suddenly returns and stands before her—from her heart he is still excluded, but the sight of one who for several years, and those years when the strongest im-

pressions are made, had been her constant companion, naturally excited her feelings, from the effects of which she is now suffering."

"Oh! I can easily fancy that," said Apperton: "as I say, he is a remarkably handsome nice agreeable man; and I am sure as far as I am concerned, I see no reason, old acquaintance as he is of all of you, for his running away in the manner he did. I should not have been either the least jealous or uncomfortable, if he had staid here for a month."

Maxwell, who had never yet seen Apperton drawn out to his full extent, and had never till now applied the varnish to the whole length portrait of the stockbroker, looked at him for a minute or two without uttering a syllable, uncertain whether his son-in-law had hitherto been acting a part, in order to obtain his daughter, or that he himself had been till this day stone blind to his imperfections. The fact is, that the surgeon had hitherto only tried him by his professional merits, his knowledge of business, and his activity in taking advantage of events likely to conduce to the profit of his principal: he had now got him on new ground; and it must be confessed, that to a man of Maxwell's notions and principles,

his *debût* in his new character was anything but gratifying. Of one thing, however, he was quite satisfied, namely, that he need entertain no alarm on the subject of his hostility towards Somerford.

"Why," said Maxwell, after expending about a minute in stirring the fire, "there is no accounting for the difference which exists in the construction aud quality of minds; you speak fairly and truly of your confidence in Kate, and your reliance on the honour of Somerford; but to hearts like theirs, the idea would be insupportable. In short, such an association would be utterly impossible, even if custom and the ways of the world did not suggest its impropriety."

"Well, sir," said Apperton, "all I have to say, I have said before. I think nothing of what is past one way or another, only I am afraid that however Kate may keep her old sweetheart out of sight, she won't keep him out of mind; and I think, though I should not say so, that it would have been better to have let her had her own way at first."

"Your generosity of feeling does you honour," said Maxwell, "generally speaking, and I as a father, not particular for severity or coercion, agree with you; but there are cer-

tain feelings and prejudices existing in certain minds, that are insuperable; there existed an obstacle to Somerford's union with my daughter, which I never could have surmounted; his want of fortune might have been, and indeed has been, overcome by circumstances; but with my feelings, and a pride which I confess savours somewhat of illiberality, but which I inherit from a long line of ancestors, from whom I am but a very unworthy descendant, I never could have reconciled his peculiar case to my views for my daughter."

"Anything disgraceful?" said Apperton.

"Not in himself," replied Maxwell; "nor indeed in anything over which he could have a controul; the fact is, Apperton, I am proud---and that's the truth. Now many of our most illustrious families have their sources in illegitimacy, and in the highest ranks of life, where the prohibition of the law itself intervenes to prevent a prince's marrying the object of his affections because her blood is not royal, the offspring of a cruelly qualified connexion, are, to my mind, exceptions to the general rule I have laid down."

"I see, sir," said Apperton.

"Now," continued Maxwell, "Somerford is the son of a most intimate friend of mine, who

married, early in life, a very amiable person, the daughter, as he believed, of very respectable parents in Suffolk; and it was not until the death of his wife's believed mother, that my friend knew he had married the offspring of some unknown parents, who had consigned her, with a marriage portion, to the care of this family. Now, if she had been the daughter of these people, humble as they were, I should have felt no repugnance at the connexion; but here is Somerford, without relation or connexion, descended from some man's natural child, most unnaturally discarded. That, Apperton, is the insuperable objection which must always have interposed itself between Charles Somerford and my daughter, in the way of man and wife. I tell you this in confidence, to calm your feelings of regret on her account, although I have never mentioned to Katharine the real impediment to what, in other days, she considered the completion of her happiness."

"And, sir," said Apperton, rising, and looking exceedingly angry, "if you had spared yourself the trouble of making the communication to *me*, I should have felt your forbearance more civil than your explanation. I see, sir, that now Captain Somerford is returned, my feelings are

not to be considered; and that what I am almost inclined to believe cannot have been the true reason for your refusal of him, is now lugged forward for the purpose of wounding me upon the most tender point."

"You!" said Maxwell. "How an explanation intended to dissipate any disagreeable feelings on your part—how that should be thus misinterpreted into an insult, I cannot possibly understand; and why you should doubt its sincerity, I am still more at a loss to conceive."

"Why, sir," said Apperton, his face crimsoned with anger and agitation, "I cannot believe that the illegitimacy of Captain Somerford's mother should have induced you to decline him as a son-in-law; and if it did, I cannot see the necessity of insulting *me* by mentioning it."

"Insult," repeated Maxwell.

"Insult!" said Apperton; "have I not a heart to feel? have I not a head to discern? have I not a hand to execute? have I not devoted myself to your interests? am I not at this moment involved on every side by furthering the most promising schemes for your enrichment?"

"I admit it, my dear Apperton," said Maxwell.

"What have I done, then, sir," continued the stockbroker, "to have reproaches cast upon me? Could I have been more interested for you —or more able; more assiduous—or more interested for you; or could I be more devoted to your child, or more attached to yourself and your family, if *I* had been a legitimate son of my father? And as to that being the ground of refusal to Somerford, it is idle; and only now mentioned to debase me, else why was I accepted?"

"I really do not comprehend," said Maxwell, "are you——

"—— yes, sir, I am," said Apperton, "one of those despised of the proud—one of those, an alliance with whom, is called a reproach to the last descendant of a long line of ancestors;—descended, indeed"—

"But, Mr. Apperton, I never understood that fact," said Maxwell.

"You never inquired," said the stockbroker; "and as I was not in the habit of considering myself disgraced by my father's libertinism, or my mother's indiscretion, I never mentioned a

story, which it seems you have now some how or other discovered."

"I discovered!" said Maxwell; "not I, upon my soul and honour; acquit me of the wish or thought, to wound or offend you. It is true, I never sought what you did not advance---I relied—and—

"And you will not be deceived," said Apperton; "you sought an honest man to be your daughter's husband—you have found one—let that content you, sir; and as for merit, there is surely more merit in founding a family, than in inheriting the honours of an old one; it is better to be the root of the tree, than a withered leafless branch, even at the top."

"Far be it from me to gainsay you," said Maxwell, who was nigh sinking through the floor of the apartment; "I said at the outset, that I admitted the weakness and folly of the prejudice I had inherited; and let me implore you, above all things, to believe that the allusion to the subject was made in an entire unconsciousness that any remark which fell from me, could by any possibility be applicable to yourself."

Having said this, and having received a warm yet silent shake of the hand from his friend Apperton, Maxwell, who had now the

satisfaction of finding that he had destroyed the happiness of his daughter eternally for the sake of avoiding a misfortune only in the second degree, by connecting her with a man who in his own person entailed it upon his family in the first, felt anxious, if he could do it without any great abruptness or indelicacy, to ascertain more particularly the nature of the connexion of which his son-in-law was the existing result, and if either of his parents were still living. Apperton, whether he saw the desire of his father-in-law, I know not, saved him the trouble of much circumlocution by reverting to the subject.

"I am satisfied," said Apperton, "by what you say, Sir, that you did not mean to annoy me. But it is curious, isn't it, that the conversation should have taken the turn it has done, so soon after my marriage, and that such a topic never should have been started before; for if it *had*, I should have been as candid then, as I am now; and still more curious is it, that your objection to Somerford should have been grounded on events, which, I suppose, in case we had discussed the question, would have driven *me* also from the connexion."

Maxwell was for once in his life puzzled for an answer. He merely made a sort of noise

between an affirmative and a grunt, entirely indescribable in writing, but which may perhaps be understood, if not expressed.

"My father," said Apperton, with all the suavity and simplicity of Norval himself, "was a merchant of London, and left me a very handsome sum of money; indeed, at his death, I found myself in possession, as I have before mentioned, of about thirty thousand pounds. This, in the course of business, has fluctuated, and I have every reason to be satisfied with my lot, and thankful to my parent, who, though not bound by any religious form to consider me as he did, never married, and bequeathed me at his death all he possessed."

"And," said Maxwell, determined to make a plunge, and know all the particulars at once, "your mother——?"

"Keeps the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliff Highway. She married the landlord of the house, by whom she has had six children; and although I have frequently suggested her retirement, and offered her any sum by way of annuity, she declines, upon the principle of sharing the fate of the honest man who married her, knowing, as he did, all the circumstances of the

case, and of providing for her family, to whom she is devotedly attached, by their own industry. She is now in her sixty-fourth year, and takes more relaxation than she formerly did. The sons chiefly carry on the business, and two of the daughters are very respectably married. These are circumstances which of course I do not ordinarily bring forward, but the conversation has produced the confession. One of the sons, (in fact, one of my brothers, as I consider him,) you have seen at my office, where he is a clerk; and my efforts will be to place them all in time as respectably as I am able."

"And a very meritorious resolution, too," said Maxwell; "and pray what may be the present name of your respected parent?"

"Biddle," said the stockbroker.

It is impossible to do justice to Maxwell's feelings at this moment; his desire to be exceedingly kind and civil, and to praise Apperton's conduct, and to smile and appear composed—the result of the struggle was merely a repetition of the name three times, in three different tones.—"Biddle—Biddle—Biddle," as if recollecting whether he had ever heard it before, as men sometimes rehearse the patronymics of individuals mentioned in society, with a

view to recall circumstances connected with them, or whether one has seen them or met them. Not that Maxwell expected to call to mind any particular connexion or association with the Biddles, but he did it habitually, and it answered as well as anything else.

"Have you," said Maxwell, "informed Kate of this connexion of yours?"

"No, I have not," replied the son-in-law; "nor perhaps is there any occasion for doing so; as I have already said I seldom speak upon the subject. But, as it struck me that you had purposely——"

"—— My dear Apperton," interrupted Maxwell, "you are now, I hope, convinced that I had no such intention; and I am equally convinced of the propriety of your views with respect to Captain Somerford. Therefore let us drop the subject altogether, and recur to what is, however, extremely disagreeable, the apparent necessity of your going to London to-morrow."

"It *is* disagreeable," said Apperton; "but the 'main chance' must be looked after. These repeated failures alarm me, I confess. I know some of the connexions of Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown; and I am very much puzzled at

their letter. *If* they *go*, it will be time for us to look about: however, we need not cry out before we are hurt, I——"

"What! you two at it yet?" said Godfrey Moss, entering the room, and bringing with him an atmosphere full of tobacco-smoke, which hung round him like the eternal fragrance of the rose. "Well, and how is Katharine?"

The question was an awkward one; for so very deeply interested had they been in their conversation touching the questionable escutcheons of the Somerfords, the Appertons and the Biddles, that Mrs. Alsop, who had been down twice to announce the state of her mistress's health, during her long interview with Edward, had preferred waiting outside the door and listening, to entering the apartment and making her speech. As soon, however, as Moss returned, she knew the confidential conference would end, and in the most opportune nick of time imaginable, she again made her appearance just as Moss had put his interrogatory, in order to request Maxwell's presence up-stairs. At this juncture, Edward came down, and Apperton, having accompanied his father-in-law to the invalid's chamber, the convivial God-

frey, aided by the said Edward, commenced the necessary preparations for that meal in which he much rejoiced, and which he thought would come in extremely well after the preparatory cigars and toddy of his respected friend on the Steyne.

CHAPTER VI.

"There is a creature who has all the organs of speech, a tolerable capacity for conceiving what is said to it, together with a pretty proper behaviour in all the occurrences of common life; but naturally very vacant of thought in itself, and therefore forced to apply itself to foreign assistance; of this make is that man who is very inquisitive."

STEELE.

THERE have been earthquakes which have swallowed up cities in a minute; and whirlwinds that have levelled moderate sized towns in a quarter of an hour—but never was devastation more rapidly or effectually produced, than that of Apperton's character and qualifications for a son-in-law in the mind of Maxwell by his own candid *exposé* of the truth. The very cunning manœuverers, who go miles out of their way to avoid something disagreeable, and achieve something very desirable, are very frequently beaten at their own game by the veriest simpletons; and when they are, their

mortification and anger are boundless. The reader may rely upon it that Maxwell's feelings were anything but agreeable when he laid down to rest (sleep was out of the question) for the night, and began to revolve in his mind the events and discoveries of the preceding half dozen hours.

The evidence of Katharine's love for Somerford; the honourable conduct of the enriched and promoted youth; and the degradation of Apperton, about whose birth, parentage, and education he had never thought of inquiring; taking it for granted that a person so regular and methodical as he was in himself, must have descended, correctly and properly, from a race of people as strait-forward, matter-of-fact, as himself: for although Maxwell had a sort of intuitive respect for the aristocracy, he unconsciously permitted himself to fall into the very common error of believing that vice and immorality were strangers to what are called the middling ranks; or that if they ever did taint that class of society, it was a circumstance of very rare occurrence.

It is curious to see how insignificance, like charity, covers a multitude of sins: the peccadilloes of middling life nobody knows of; and if

any body did know of them, nobody would care about them. The importance of the characters alone give interest to the great drama of life. The billing and cooing of a couple of sparrows is matter of no great edification to any body, but a flirtation between a pair of Elephants would be a matter for general wonderment and conversation.

The truth is, as I have already said, Maxwell was so dazzled by the wealth which Apperton had promised him, that he put himself entirely under his guidance; and having so far linked his fate with that of his minister, he neither saw, nor sought, any reason against binding him to his interest by ties of a nearer and dearer nature than those of mere professional duty; and thus it was that Katharine's happiness was sacrificed. That it *was* sacrificed, had been now made too evident to her father; and, therefore, when he found that his only objection to its completion existed in a much stronger degree in the case of Apperton than in that of Somerford, his feelings were beyond description painful.

In the morning, in consequence of new letters from London, the necessity of the stockbroker's departure for town was decided. The house of

Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown *had* stopped payment, and all the worst anticipations of their trembling customers were realized. The horror-stricken countenance of the stock-broker too plainly spoke the greatness of his apprehensions, if not of his actual loss. His looks were wild, his manner restless. The illness of his wife seemed not a feather's weight upon his mind; —he groaned with agony as he sat at the breakfast table, and swallowed his tea, unconscious of what he was doing.

"Why, stockbroker," said Moss, "you have had bad news from town, havn't you?"

"Yes, sir," said Apperton, snappishly,— "very bad."

"And are you going up to London?" said Moss.

"At twelve o'clock," said Apperton; "at least I have sent Stevens to get a place if he can."

"And when do you come back?" said Moss.

"God knows," said Apperton.

"No chance of waddling is there?" said Moss.

"Of what, sir?" said Apperton, looking at him as if he could have eaten him.

"No serious loss, I hope," said Moss, moderating his voice, and judiciously changing his

style with his tone, so as to suit the "fluctuations" in his companion's temper.

"Serious," said Apperton, "that time will shew—two banking houses gone in six and thirty hours—at one of which I had an account—and at the other, for all I know, large deposits; however, my maxim is, nothing venture nothing have—and, perhaps, all may be right yet."

"'Tis a sad business to wind up the gaieties of the honey-moon," said Moss.

"Gaieties," said Apperton, "Ha! ha!—there has been not much gaiety for me—Mrs. Apperton, I fancy, will feel my absence a great misfortune."

"Misfortune!" grunted Moss, filling his mouth with a large square piece of toast and butter, as an excuse for not saying any thing more.

"I dare say, Mr. Moss, you know what I mean," said Apperton, whose pecuniary embarrassments seemed to have exacerbated his general character—"that Captain Somerford, Sir—it seems very strange nobody could mention his name before me, during the whole time I knew the family."

"Somerford!" said Moss, not at all aware of

the extent of Apperton's knowledge, and not at all anxious to enlighten him more than was absolutely necessary—" ah—Charles—Charles Somerford."

" My wifes's former lover, Mr. Moss, I mean," replied the stock-broker, with a look of *fierté* of an entirely novel character; " his unlucky arrival here has caused all this illness of her's; his letter to her, unravelled the mystery, and I find myself duped by Mr. Maxwell into marrying his daughter, and thus unconsciously destroying her hopes of happiness with the man she loved."

" Ah!" said Moss.

" And here I am," continued Apperton, " like a bad bill, dishonoured after acceptance."

" And without even three days' grace," said Moss, who could not resist the opportunity of carrying on the facetious figure.

" And for what, Mr. Moss," said Apperton, " has all this mischief been done?—to avoid the disgrace of marrying the young lady to a deserving man whom she loved, because he could not tell who his grandfather was. In a country like England, where the highest places are open to the lowest candidates, it would greatly check the course of promotion, if the government were to be equally scrupulous;—for my part, I scorn

the pride that has been the source of Kate's unhappiness. I laugh at it, sir. Is it because my mother keeps the Cat and Cauliflower in Ratcliff Highway, that I---"

Moss conceiving at this period of the conversation, that his associate's brains had been turned by the fluctuation of the money market, drew back his chair, muttering a sort of curse at the words Cat and Cauliflower; and would, in all probability, have made the best of his way out of the room, had not Apperton's servant informed him that there was a place in the twelve o'clock coach, which he had secured for him.

"Then go up to Mrs. Apperton's maid," said Apperton, "and bid her tell Mr. Maxwell, that I wish to speak to him; and ask at the same time whether I may see your mistress, as I have not above three-quarters of an hour to stay."

"Am I to go with you to town, sir?" said Apperton's servant.

"No," said Apperton, "I go alone. Pack a small portmanteau, and put up my razors."

Moss thought the last part of these directions was given with a peculiar emphasis; and that those smooth-edged instruments were very likely to perform some other and more dreadful duty

than simple shaving—so thoroughly was he convinced of the madness of his companion.

"Mr. Moss," said Apperton, when the servant had left the room, "there are turns in our lives which happen suddenly; and there is a saying, that 'misfortunes seldom come single.' I have been a very prosperous man in life—but the point is past; my prospects in London are anything but cheering; the alteration in public affairs is evident, and I have, I honestly confess, hazarded everything on the chance. The discovery made in my private life by the unexpected, and I now say, unfortunate meeting of Kate and her old lover, goes to my very heart. I am an unpretending person, and but partially polished or endowed with what are called accomplishments; but such as I am, Miss Maxwell accepted me. I was gratified in having such a wife, and anxious to do every thing in my power to please her and to serve her father; but he has deceived me; and she has deceived me, to oblige and obey him: and, in a few words, I'll tell you, Mr. Moss, I am a wretched man."

"My dear Apperton," said Moss, "you must not talk in this manner: whatever Kate's feelings may have been, or may be, towards

Charles Somerford, you will never be wronged by her. She has plighted her faith to you, and to you will she be the same excellent, exemplary wife, as if Somerford had never seen her."

"I know she will," said Apperton, "and therefore she is doomed to be a wretched woman all her life. Her existence is to be a struggle between her affection for one man and her duty towards another. The wind and the tide, when they go together, make the voyage sweet and pleasant; but when they are opposed, Mr. Moss, the storm and strife is continual, and the inconvenience, not to call it danger, is of no inconsiderable magnitude."

"But she," said Moss—

The return of the servant with Mr. Maxwell's compliments, and his wish that Apperton should come to him then, to Mrs. Apperton's room, where he and Edward were, stopped the speaker in his progress; and Apperton's prompt obedience to the summons of his father-in-law put a period to the conversation.

When the agitated son-in-law had quitted the room, Moss began to think on "things in general," and the result of his deliberations was extremely unfavourable to the future peace and tranquillity of the family. In coming to this

conclusion, he seemed more fully justified when he found that Apperton was on the point of going to the coach-office to start for London, after a conversation with Maxwell of no great length, but of very considerable violence, and which indeed had been audible in the greater part of the house, and consequently of the neighbourhood. Reproaches were mutually cast by the contending parties, and Apperton, whose allegations against his father-in-law all bore upon the tender point of his deceptive conduct in forcing on his daughter's marriage, were retorted in sharper terms by Maxwell, who charged Apperton with neglect of his interests, and even a wilful misapplication of the funds which had been entrusted to him. Both parties were angry—both disappointed—both unhappy; while the gloomy appearance of the event, which affected them both, gave to the contention a character of carelessness and desperation not likely to change or moderate until some very great alteration in existing circumstances had occurred; and even then, Maxwell alone expected to reap advantage by change. In Apperton's view of his matrimonial connexion, nothing could ever occur to destroy his confidence in his wife's honour and duty, for those he never doubted; but

belief in her affections, which he held it to be impossible for any woman to divide, he had none.

The parting was stormy; and Moss, who remained ensconced in the parlour, was not displeased to find that Apperton did not think of turning in, to bid *him* farewell. The old gentleman looked over the blind as he passed before the window, on his way to the coach-office, and amply feeding both his nostrils from the tortoise-shell chest in which he carried his snuff, made one of his usual expressive noises, thereby meaning to imply, that he considered it extremely probable, under all the circumstances of the case, that he should never see the stock-brokering boy again.

"Is he gone, sir," said Kate to her father, when he returned to her room.

"He is," said Maxwell, "and in anger too; his language was violent, and even coarse; and one allusion he made, which I confess, has alarmed me."

"On what account?" said Katharine.

"Edward," said Maxwell, "go down to Moss for a few minutes; I wish to speak to your sister alone."

"That will I do, sir," said Edward; "or perhaps, if you don't want me here for half an

hour, take a stroll on the cliff till luncheon time."

"As you please, my boy," said Maxwell.

"Hunt for my beauty," said Edward; "she seems to haunt me every where, perhaps she may be hovering about me here."

"No, no," said Maxwell, "you'll not see her *here*, depend upon it."

Edward obeyed his father's desire, and quitted the room.

"Kate," said Maxwell, in a tone and manner which marked the deep interest he took in her answer to the question he was about to put to his daughter, "Apperton has said a thing which may or may not bear the meaning I apprehend it does; you alone can satisfy me on that head."

"You may of course command me," said Kate.

"My character, said Maxwell, "my life, perhaps, depends upon his knowledge or ignorance of that affair, to which my timid and suspicious nature leads me to dread that he may have pointed. Now, Kate, calm yourself, or I will not proceed."

"I am calm, sir," said Kate; "to what do you refer?"

"You are his wife," said Maxwell; "and it

may be, that, being so, you have considered it right to have no concealments from him—no mental reservation?"

"Alas!" said Kate, "you surely do not mean to reproach me now with my unwillingness to acknowledge Charles. I—"

"No, no, no," said Maxwell; "on that point, I would to heaven the concealment had lasted to eternity—no harm could have arisen, with feelings like your's, and principles like Somerford's;—no—but there *are* circumstances—facts, Kate, of which you are in possession, not affecting him or yourself, that, when once united to Apperton, you might have felt it your duty to mention."

"To what do you allude, sir?" said Kate.

"I mean that secret, Kate," said Maxwell, "which you ripped from my bosom at the end of last year—that secret, on which my respectability—my character—my existence, as I have always said, depend."

"But, sir," said Kate——

"Have you, at any moment," said Maxwell, "glanced at the event to Apperton?"

"Never, sir," said Kate; "and to no human being existing have I ever hinted one syllable concerning it. I lament to my very heart that

mistaken zeal and too ardent affection, put me in possession of that secret; but no—am I not sworn to you, by the duty I owe you, never to whisper it?—ask Edward, my dear, dear brother, who has often urged me to confide it to him—I have rejected his prayer with scorn—and to Apperton, should I, do you think, have imparted what I refused to Edward?"

"Why," said Maxwell, "fraternal affection is one of the sweetest links in nature; but a husband, perhaps, might claim a confidence which no other connexion has a right to demand."

"But he knows not of it," said Kate.

"He knows *of* the secret," said Maxwell; "and I thought, perhaps, he might have inquired the cause of the disturbance, and you might have told him."

"Not I," said Kate—"not one syllable has passed my lips."

"Then I am comparatively happy," said Maxwell. "In the temper in which Apperton has left me, a man would inconsiderately ruin his nearest and best friend, upon an impulse, which, perhaps, he might for all the rest of his life regret; and what he said in his anger led me to suppose that I was in his power."

"Assure yourself, my dearest father," said

Kate, "he knows nothing of those circumstances."

Whatever those circumstances were, it was clear they must be rather important, since the manner and appearance of Maxwell were totally changed, after this conversation with his daughter; he was agitated and alarmed about his pecuniary speculations, and began to believe, as, indeed, he had told his son-in-law, that he had risked too much; but although that consideration naturally preyed upon his spirits, it was as a feather compared with the weight of alarm and apprehension under which he suffered, whenever the mysterious affair of his bed-chamber was alluded to.

Maxwell, who, with the tender care of the parent combined all the skilful attention of the doctor, prescribed a short walk for Kate—gentle exercise in the sun and air; to which her simple-minded husband had thought proper to attribute her indisposition, her father considered as most essential to her recovery; and accordingly, it was arranged that they should stroll along the cliffs, and bask, as it were, in the sun-beams, having the carriage in attendance; so that, should the weather suddenly change, or the delicate patient feel herself fatigued, she might change her

course of proceeding, and return in the chariot. This expedition was to move after luncheon, and Moss bargained that he should take his share of exercise in the carriage in the first instance, to be ready to become Kate's companion on her return, if she found it necessary to avail herself of its accommodation.

According to the *programme* was this arrangement put into execution, and Kate, between her father and brother, proceeded to walk, while Godfrey and his snuff-box were established in the carriage. Edward, who never gave up the hope of seeing his fay, kept looking round in every direction, anticipating the awkwardness of a rencontre, which should by any accident bring the beautiful vision in contact with himself and his father simultaneously.

Maxwell, as it was natural he should, saw many faces he knew—bows answered bows—and smiles beamed upon him from various people, some of whom were indebted to him for having brought them into the world, and others who were equally obliged to him for having sent their rich relations out of it. Maxwell was a very popular man, and made it his study to be so; to be sure the world in general had not the opportunities of seeing him "at home"

with which the reader has been indulged, and when abroad, his words were honied, and the lips from which they flowed dressed in the most winning smiles. Never is a naval captain known till one has sailed with him in his own ship, and on the blue water—never is a man understood until we have seen him divested of his world-going habits, and in the mental *dishabille* which gentlemen of all ranks and conditions are pretty much in the habit of wearing at home.

"Mercy on us!" said Maxwell, "here's Lord Hillingdon—of all the bores—what can we do?—he'll be sure to stop; and if he does, Kate, you will get chilled and cold."

"Why he won't stop long, perhaps," said Kate, who, meek and humble as she was, felt no disinclination at a transient *tête-à-tête* on the Steyne at Brighton, with a nobleman so known and so distinguished as the Earl of Hillingdon.

"But he *will* stop," said Maxwell; "he is a sort of inquisitor general, and if he begins his usual interrogatories, we shall never shake him off; however, the Philistines are on us."

"Maxwell," said the Earl, "how do you do?—how do you do?"

"Quite well, my lord," said the surgeon,

making a bow, and endeavouring to pass on. Here he was foiled.

"When did you come here?" said Lord Hillingdon, looking at Kate, while speaking to her father, the top button of whose coat his lordship firmly grasped.

"I came from town yesterday," said Maxwell.

"Your daughter, I presume," said his lordship, bowing to the young lady.

"It is, my lord."

"And pray, Miss Maxwell, where are you staying?" said his lordship.

Kate's blushing, and a sort of queer feeling of confusion, and something like shame, at being the wife of Apperton, betrayed her.

"My daughter is married, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Married!" said his lordship,—"long?"

"Not long."

"What is the name of the happy man?" said Lord Hillingdon

"Apperton, my lord."

"Apperton!" said Lord Hillingdon, "odd name!—Apperton!—What! is he a doctor?"

"No, my lord," said Maxwell.

"A merchant, I suppose," said his lordship.

"A stockbroker, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Stockbroker!" said his lordship, " they are all great rogues, a'n't they?—I remember hearing so once;—and where are you staying?"

" On the East Cliff, my lord," said Kate.

" What an infernal situation!" said Lord Hillingdon; " bad houses—bad look out;—what could induce you to go there?"

" We could not get any other house, my lord," said Kate.

" Plenty of houses, now," said his lordship; " do you stay long?"

" Only a week or ten days," said Maxwell.

" Do you like Brighton?" said his lordship.

" Very much, my lord," replied Mrs. Apperton.

" Is your husband here?"

" No, my lord."

" What!" said his lordship; " so soon a truant? ha! ha! very bad taste, eh?—don't you think so Maxwell, eh? Any news in town when you came away?"

" None that I heard of," said Maxwell.

" Good deal of distress about money, isn't there?" said Lord Hillingdon, " bankers breaking every day—are you going to the ball to night, Mrs.—what name did you say?"

" Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Apperton!" said his lordship, "deuced odd name—like apple-pye—is it Scotch?"

"I believe not," said Maxwell.

"I never heard the name before," said the nobleman.

No! thought Maxwell, perhaps your lordship has never seen the Cat and Cauliflower on Radcliffe Highway.

"You *are* going to the ball?" said his lordship.

"No, my lord," said Kate, "I—"

"Why don't you go?" asked his lordship.

"I did not hear there *was* a ball," replied Kate.

"Ah! that's because you live on the East Cliff," said his lordship—"do you like dancing?"

"I did, my lord, formerly," said Kate.

"Capital!" said his lordship, "but at your venerable age you abandon it, eh?—do you waltz?"

"I never have waltzed, my lord," said Mrs. Apperton.

"Upon principle, eh?" said his lordship.

"I do not admire the dance," said Kate; "it makes me so giddy after it is over."

"The cynics say, you must be giddy before you begin," said Lord Hillingdon: "which way are you walking?"

"Towards the West Cliff, my lord," said Maxwell.

"I'll turn with you," said his lordship; "is that your carriage?"

"It is my lord," said the surgeon.

"Why do you have it follow you?" asked his lordship.

"Kate is not very well, and I have it as a refuge for her at hand, if she should feel tired," said Maxwell.

"Not well!" said Lord Hillingdon; "what's the matter?—she don't look ill."

"A head-ache," said Kate, as women always say when any thing, even the heart-ache, ails them.

"I'm afraid a little pining for Mr.—what did you say his name was?—Ap—Ap— ?"

"Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Very odd name to be sure, Apperton," said Lord Hillingdon; "have you as much practice as ever, Maxwell, eh?"

"Pretty much the same, my lord," said Maxwell.

"You must make a fine income, Maxwell," said his lordship; "I wonder you don't retire from business—nasty work, cutting, and saw-

ing, and chopping, and all that, at your time of life, eh?"

"I love my profession," said Maxwell.

"What a very odd taste," said his lordship; "don't you think so, Mrs.—I've forgot again."

"Apperton, my lord," said Kate. "I do not wonder at my father's affection for a profession which, before he entered it, he chose."

"Ah!" said the Earl, "that's no rule. I entered the army by choice; but I assure you I was deucedly glad to get out of it. I suppose you stand third or fourth on the list now, Maxwell?"

"I am incompetent," said Maxwell, "to place myself."

"Surgery is better than physic," said the Earl, "it requires more skill and more study; the work is superficial, and a blunder betrays itself; a physician may work away at a fellow for a twelvemonth, and kill him at last, and yet nobody know that he did not die of disease; but with your craft a bad cut shows itself. I remember reading in a book, that a surgeon ought to have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand—eh!—did you ever hear that?"

"I have, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Do you recollect where?" said his lordship.

" I can't say I do at this moment," said Maxwell.

" I have seen it in Ray's Proverbs," said Edward, who had for the first time ventured a word.

" Ah!" said the Earl, attracted by the sound of a new voice, " you are right—hey?—is this one of your family, Maxwell?"

" My son, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Indeed!" said his lordship, " what is he?"

" He is to be a lawyer, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Lawyers are all infernal rogues, eh?" said Lord Hillingdon; " upon my honour they tell me so.—I don't mean judges and chancellors, and that sort of thing—but small lawyers, eh!—barrister, I suppose—eh?"

" Yes, my lord," said Edward Maxwell, to whom this interrogatory was put.

" Do you know much about it?" said his lordship,—" eh?"

" Not a great deal, my lord," replied the young man, wishing him, at the same moment, at the bottom of the sea.

" Coke upon Littleton, eh,—Blackstone, and all that," continued Lord Hillingdon; " my

grandfather used to tell me, when he was a young man, that the lawyers wore their wigs and gowns wherever they went—eh !—droll that?—what—ladies do so now—but not lawyers. Where are you—Lincoln's Inn or Temple?"

" Lincoln's Inn, my Lord."

" Very good, very good,

Lincoln's Inn for gentlemen,

eh—that's quite right. I look upon professional men as gentlemen; hey ! don't you? Law, physic, and divinity, eh !—the three male graces, eh?—don't you know, eh?—do you know the Smiths?"

" No, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Clever fellows—*they* said that—about the male graces, eh ! rejected addresses: don't you know the rejected addresses—*you* do, I dare say, Mrs. App—? what is it, again,—I always forget."

" Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

" Apperton—such a very odd name to be sure, eh !" said his lordship; " have you been on the chain-pier?"

" I was there yesterday," said Kate, " and a thousand recollections here occurred to her.

" So was I—saw such people come out of an

Indiaman, eh!" said he, "have you never been at sea?"

"No, my lord," said Maxwell, "very little indeed."

"You didn't begin as naval surgeon, eh!" said the Earl; "half the cleverest men in your profession have begun at sea, eh!—d'ye like sailing?"

"I cannot say I do," said Maxwell.

"I belong to the yacht club," said his lordship, "I have got a schooner—sharp—fast and compact. I should be very glad, Mrs. Apps—App—eh!—what is it?"

"Apperton, my lord," said Kate.

"Ah!—odd name to be sure," said the Earl; "I should be very glad if you would do my Narcissa the honour of coming on board, if you should visit the Isle of Wight. Sea breezes are very wholesome, Maxwell, arn't they?"

"Very, my lord," said Maxwell, who was heartily sick of the Earl and his interrogatories.

"When did you say you go to town?" said his lordship.

"In about ten days, my lord," repeated Maxwell.

"Town full when you came away?"

" Getting full, my lord."

" Do you know Lord Bryanston," said his lordship.

" Not personally," said Maxwell.

" Here he comes," said the Earl, " excellent creature—such a heart,—eh!—don't he look it, eh?"

Maxwell turned towards the nobleman who approached them, with a double feeling of gratification: he saw before him a fine venerable personage, whose aspect was at once noble and benevolent; and, moreover, he saw in his lordship what he hoped would be a relief from the kind attentions of the Earl; but he was mistaken.

" Lord Bryanston, how do you do?" said Lord Hillingdon; " why, you are walking stoutly to day."

" Yes," said the noble lord, " I flatter myself that King Gout, who generally torments his subjects at Brighton, is abdicating."

" If he return," said the Earl, " I can do no better than recommend my friend Maxwell to your lordship's notice, as a very able antagonist of the fiery monarch."

Maxwell bowed to Lord Bryanston, as in

duty bound, and Lord Bryanston bowed in return.

" I have often had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Maxwell's name," said Lord Bryanston, at the same time looking as if he was endeavouring to recollect where.

" Good morning, my lord," said Maxwell, anxious to disentangle himself from the peerage.

" I'll be after you in five minutes," said Lord Hillingdon: " keep along the cliff, and I shall overtake you."

" I trust not," *mentally* ejaculated the surgeon, who had no sooner cleared the peer, than he bore up East Street towards North Street, thus adroitly destroying the chance of being overtaken; first having deposited Kate in the carriage with Moss, and directed the coachman to take the full range of both cliffs, from Hove to Roedean, upon the saving principle of driving " between the Pikes," universally adopted by dowagers and others of economical propensities.

" I do not recollect," said Lord Bryanston, to his noble companion, " ever to have seen Mr. Maxwell before; but I have had occasion to know that he is a man of most amiable charac-

ter and benevolent disposition. I am sorry that I leave Brighton to-morrow, or I should very much like to have made an acquaintance with him: and, indeed, now you have broken the ice for me, I could do so with much less difficulty than I could before—umph !" continued his lordship—musing—" and that young lady is his daughter, I presume."

" Exactly," said Lord Hillingdon.

" A nice looking, lady-like girl," said Lord Bryanston, who seemed anxious to continue the conversation.

" She is a bride," said the Earl.

" Married is she !" said Lord Bryanston; " do you happen to recollect the name of her husband."

" Upon my life, no," said the Earl; " it is something like apple-pye, but I never can recollect it---it's a deuced odd name: a name I never heard before. And so you are off to-morrow ?"

" Yes," said Lord Bryanston, " not to remain for any great length of time. I have a ward, a young lady, who is troubled with a large fortune, which I am troubled to take care of; and she is coming to town to be presented, and to come out, and dance herself into fashion

during the season. However I suppose I sha'n't have her long on hand; eight or ten thousand a year, and a pretty person, are likely soon to be snapped up in the matrimonial market of London. So that if constant vigilance is required to see that she does not fall into bad hands, this watchfulness will not be required for any very long period. By the bye, Lord Hillingdon; do you happen to recollect what profession Mr. Maxwell's son-in-law follows?"

"A—what d'ye call those people?" said his lordship, "psha—a—stockbroker."

"A stockbroker!" repeated Lord Bryanston, "umph!" and again he seemed to muse.—"Can I do any thing in town for you, Lord Hillingdon?"

"Nothing, nothing," said the Earl; "I shall be up myself, about the end of the week. Adieu—I must overtake my friends;" saying which, the noble lords separated; and the Earl hastened onwards in the hope of catching Maxwell, and recommencing his questions: for, as the reader may have observed, the propensity to inquire was never present when he was in the society of his equals; it was from his inferiors he hoped to gain information upon all subjects, and an insight into the ways and manners of a class of society in which he did

not ordinarily mix; besides he felt that it gave him consequence to catechise his humble companions, and his questions, as it may have been perceived, were more general in their bearings than useful in their objects.

Kate, on her return home, felt considerably better for her little excursion; nor was Apperton's absence displeasing to her in her present state of mind: conscious as she was of his opinion of the nature of her present affection for *him*, and her former attachment to Charles, she could not associate with him tranquilly or comfortably. As he had too truly said, this intercourse, while her feelings were still in a state of perturbation, was little else than a struggle between duty and inclination; and she breathed a silent prayer that his occupations in London might, for the present, detain him there.

Maxwell, although suspicious of the nature of her sentiments, and her secret wishes with regard to the return of her husband, was all kindness and gentleness to his poor wounded daughter; he saw the ruin he had caused, and Apperton's confession, made in a moment of mistaken pride and anger, having reduced the husband of his choice even below the standard of her former lover, he sought by every possible

act of paternal love and affection to soothe poor Kate's sorrows; of which, over-reached as he had been, he could not but consider himself the real cause.

Edward met scarcely anybody he knew at the sea side, and his chief pleasure was watching the wide waste of waters, thinking (poor young gentleman!) that his beloved and lost Maria was borne upon its bosom to some distant land. All society now was painful to him, except that of his sister, with whom, in his father's absence, he could talk of his sorrows, and the final fiat pronounced by the old gentleman, against his daughter's happiness.

In this state of feverish agitation and painful suspence, the family party were united alone in one wish; namely, to hear the result of Apperton's financial proceedings, in the issue of which, it now appeared but too certain, that the fate of the whole family was most seriously and vitally involved.

CHAPTER VII.

Oh, sacred sorrow! He who knows not thee,
Knows not the best emotions of the heart;
Those tender tears that humanize the soul,
The sigh that charms, the pang that gives delight:
He dwells too near to cruelty and pride,
And is a novice in the school of virtue.

THOMPSON.

THE state of mind in which Somerford reached London may be easily imagined. The infidelity of a long-loved being falls upon the heart a heavy, dreadful blow; and if in common cases the infliction is terrible, in Somerford's it was doubly so. In losing the object of his affection, his only tie to England was dissolved; her family were almost, if not quite, the only persons he knew in his native country. The home of his heart, to which he had looked forward with longing eyes, was closed against him, and he felt, when he reached the metropolis, alone in the multitude.

Of his mother, who had died during his ab-

sence, who should speak to him? he had heard no particulars even of her death, the intelligence of which had been conveyed to him in a letter from Maxwell; he knew of no relations that he had, nor any friend to turn to, for consolation or advice. He was ignorant of the true cause of Maxwell's decided disinclination to a connexion with him; and from not knowing the real character of his mother's connexion with the Woodly family, of which she was always considered by *him*, and all who knew them, the daughter, he was led to hope that there might be some relation of her's, or of his father's, still living. But upon this latter point he had little faith; since he recollected to have heard, not only Maxwell, but his father himself, state that he was an only son of an only son, an argument he used to adduce in favour of having married an inferior, saying, that being so completely alone in the world, he had nobody to please but himself.

Although Kate Maxwell's marrying had so decidedly separated her from Somerford, and closed the door of her father's house against him, there was still an aching, longing pain about his heart, which proved to him how deeply rooted was the feeling which attached

him to the family; the first hour he passed in London was devoted to a walk to visit the well-known street in which his youthful hours had been so happily passed; he stopped before it, and gazed upon the door, and on the very steps that led to it, and a thousand reflexions and remembrances came into his mind. From that door how frequently had he departed with the dear object of his first and only love for scenes of gaiety and parties of pleasure! Oh! there *was* a time, when he was welcomed into it by the cheering looks of friendship and the sweet smiles of love; now, it stood sullenly shut against him, and the closed windows of the rooms in which his days of boyhood and careless joy were spent, seemed to announce the death of all his hopes and pleasures. Yes—Kate was gone—and gone—to be the wife of another!

There *are* streets and houses in this great city of ours which cannot fail to conjure up such thoughts as these, in minds not given much to sorrow; and strike daggers into hearts which those who know them not, believe incapable of such a feeling; Somerford himself had scarcely understood the full extent of his unhappiness, till this visit to the well-remem-

bered scene of all his former joys had brought it clearly to his view.

Charles, at the period of which I now write, did not believe it possible that he could ever see or speak to any of the Maxwell family again. Kate, whose heart was on the rack after the receipt of his letter, felt that she ought not to reply to it, as the wife of Apperton; but candid and ingenuous as she was, she imparted to her father a wish that *he* should, as far as possible, exonerate her from the hateful charge of fickleness and falsehood, and explain to Charles the real state of her heart and mind when she accepted Apperton.

The task, it must be confessed, was somewhat difficult; for Maxwell, though kind and good, was, as he himself said, proud; and for him to descend to particulars with Somerford, which could not fail, in their disclosure, to exhibit something very like duplicity in his own conduct, as regarded the termination of the correspondence between Charles and Katharine, and which throughout must evince to the young man a disinclination on her father's part, to a matrimonial connexion, which could not be accounted for, without needlessly wounding his feelings, was indeed a trial. Maxwell felt no disinclina-

tion meet, to see, or even to receive his former *protegé;* but Kate forbad a renewal of the acquaintance under the circumstances; she felt that she had fallen,—perhaps by the influence of misrepresentation and even falsehood, which had been called in to the consummation of Somerford's rejection; but she was sure they could not now live upon terms like those on which they had lived before his departure.

Whatever were eventually to be the results of Mrs. Apperton's request to her father on this point, it is clear that Somerford, agitated as he was on his arrival in the metropolis, by a thousand contending feelings, was not likely to desire that a reconciliation, or a renewal of his correspondence with the elder Maxwell should (and he never believed it would) take place. His inquiries were particularly touching the death of his mother.

Somerford's affection for his surviving parent, at the time of his departure, was exemplary; and frequently his pride had taken fire at what even then appeared to him her almost studied exclusion from Maxwell's house, while he was so favourably and flatteringly received under its roof; yet he could not but admit, that her manners and habits were not so polished as those

of Miss Maxwell: and when she was invited, on certain festivals, such as Christmas-day, the birth-day of her son, or Maxwell's birth-day, or any of those family celebrations, at which she was bidden to assist, he not only saw by her conduct, but knew from herself, that she disliked the trouble of playing fine, and preferred her own snuggery, as she called her lodgings, and such associates as she could select from amongst a class of people, highly respectable in their way, but who were by no means versed in the little delicacies of superior society.

Still she was his mother; and now that the turn of circumstances had induced him to look at the conduct of the Maxwell family with suspicion, if not with bitterness, a thousand doubts flashed into his mind as to the treatment they had shown his parent after his departure from England. When he was here before, his whole heart was with the Maxwells—love, friendship, affection and esteem, every kindly feeling of his nature, they swayed and controlled; but now the link was broken. From what Kate herself had said, he knew that the elder Maxwell had played him false in his letters, as far as *she* was concerned; why might not the coldness, which he had noticed as a youth, and which the

family evinced towards his parent, have been so much increased as to have been converted eventually into neglect and contempt? If it had been so, would his sword rest in its scabbard while a Maxwell lived? would he not avenge the slightest insult that had been cast upon his lone and helpless parent? His course was soon resolved on. He knew the village where she died; the house in which she breathed her last; the name of her, whose house it was; and who, as Maxwell had told him, had most carefully attended her during her last illness. Thither would he go, see the woman so spoken of, and ascertain from *her*, whatever particulars might be attainable respecting the last hours of his poor mother's existence.

Apperton, who reached London in the middle of the day following that, on which his *rival* had arrived in it, was infinitely more worried than the Captain, except, as far as filial solicitude went, because the comfortable establishment of the Biddles rendered any anxiety of his on their account wholly unnecessary: but affairs in the City had taken a most serious turn; loss upon loss had accrued; and the bolstering system having been adopted, the whole object of the enterprizing stockbroker was to

delay, as long as possible, a crisis which, to his prospective eye, began to appear inevitable. Acceptances which he held to a serious amount, had been dishonoured; the securities offered for the money were unavailable; and the fresh and increasing failures on every hand began terribly to alarm him.

Maxwell as yet reposed in comparative tranquillity; although in less than ten days, his name and solvency would come to be questioned. Maxwell, the proud and ambitious Maxwell, had not only placed the whole of his personal property at the disposal of his son-in-law, for the purchase of shares and bonds, and slices of loans, and other wonderful speculations, but had gone the length of accepting bills to the amount of more than thirty thousand pounds, his name being, upon the strength of what he was known to possess as a fundholder, very well received by the doers of such commodities.

In addition to this responsibility, Apperton had persuaded him to remove his account from a banker's at the west end of the town, where he had kept his money for years, to the banker's, (that is, to one of his bankers,) in the city. To the floating credit there, Apperton had always looked for an immediate supply for casual ex-

penses, in case that greater affairs should not make their returns exactly as they were anticipated. His embarrassment may be conceived, when, on the day of his arrival, he found amongst others the very firm that he had recommended to his father-in-law's patronage, bankrupt!

His first care, upon the aforesaid bolstering system, was to get five hundred pounds and send it per post to Maxwell, at Brighton, in the letter which announced the failure of the bank, where at the moment his balance was not very much more than that sum. That manœuvre he thought would have the double effect of soothing the old gentleman's mind, as to any present inconvenience, and very much exalt the character of his active connexion, who had taken such prompt means to assure him, in the most satisfactory manner, not only of his own safety, but of the power his son-in-law and monitor possessed of smoothing any difficulties as soon as they occurred.

The reader may begin to perceive that the causes of all the toil and trouble of this once peaceful, happy, and united family of Maxwell, had their origin in pride and ambition. Pride it was, that rejected Somerford; ambition—the small ambition of wealth—it was, that made

Apperton acceptable; but the justice of Providence seemed likely to thwart the narrow views of fallible man; we have already found that Apperton was even more objectionable in point of birth than Somerford, and it seemed now more than probable, unless a change of affairs rapidly took place, that Somerford would shortly prove the richer as well as the better man.

Somerford, however, was destined to meet with information new to him, and decidedly unexpected. On the second day after his arrival in town, he proceeded from Ibbotson's hotel, to which he had been recommended by Mr. Macleod, his compagnon de voyage from the Cape, to the village of Stockwell, in Surrey, where his late respectable mother died. Stockwell, so celebrated as the last residence of the "Angels" upon earth, and famed in all the magazines and newspapers of the day for the "wonder" which bears its name, and which, if true, is indeed of all wonders the most wonderful.

Thither did the dutiful son repair, and finding, without any difficulty, the residence of the old gentlewoman with whom his mother had latterly lived, and in whose house she died, introduced himself to her, and was as cordially received as

he could have wished or expected, by one who had long cherished a warm and affectionate friendship for his parent.

"She lived with me, sir," said Mrs. Anderson, (so was the mistress of the house named,) "from about a year after you went abroad, to the hour of her death. She was a great loss to me; for she was so kind, and good-natured, and affable, that we all loved her. My daughter's little children used to call her mother. Dear lady! she had no pride nor conceit about her, and we all lived here together just like one happy family."

Somerford was deeply affected at the genuine tone in which the poor old lady spoke her feelings with regard to his parent.

"And pray," said he, "during my poor mother's illness, did Mr. Maxwell's family pay her much attention?"

"The old gentleman," said Mrs. Anderson, "never failed to visit her once or twice a day; and as for Miss Katharine, she did not quit her side till all hope was over. Oh, sir! she is a sweet, good young lady, and a thousand pities it is, that you and she were ever parted. I 've heard all the story from your poor dear mother herself—but perhaps even yet you may come together,—who knows?"

"That, I fear, is past praying for," said Charles; "Miss Katharine that *was*, is married."

"Married, sir!" exclaimed the old lady; "dear me, only think of that! I never heard a word about it—has she been married long, sir?—it wasn't in the newspapers."

"Not very long," said Somerford; "scarcely a week, I think."

"And who is she married to, sir?" said Mrs. Anderson.

"To a Mr. Apperton," said Somerford.

"Apperton!" repeated Mrs. Anderson; "not Johnny Apperton sure, that was at school two and-thirty years ago at Streatham, long before these houses were built. What is he, sir?"

"I believe a stockbroker," said Somerford.

"Ah, I know," said Mrs. Anderson; "there's a great many of them living about here—that's the same man rely upon it. He was the son of old Wagstaff, that used to live on the common, long before you were born."

"Wagstaff!" said Somerford; "how came his name Apperton then?"

"That was his mother's name," said Mrs. Anderson; "she was a very good-looking woman in her time, and if it is she as I mean, she is lawfully married, and her name now is

Biddle, and her husband is very well to do, and keeps the Cat and Cauliflower in or near Ratcliff Highway."

"What a curious combination of names," said Somerford; "Biddle and Wagstaff—but you surely must be mistaken."

"No, sir, I'm not," said the old gentlewoman. "His father, although he was only a natural son, left him a large sum of money, and he set up as a stockbroker, and has made a deal more of it, they say; and, to my certain knowledge, has been very kind to his mother, and the children she has had by her husband Biddle."

"But isn't it rather a strange connexion for the Maxwell family?" said Somerford.

"It is, indeed," said Mrs. Anderson; "but that's the way of the world, sir—they strain at gnats and swallow camels. After Mr. Maxwell's sending you abroad, as your poor dear mother always said he did—she never quite forgave him for *that*—to put an end to your sweethearting with his daughter, to think of his putting up with Johnny Apperton—why, you know, in your case, it wasn't half so bad, because *your* poor dear mother *was* an honest woman, whatever his might have been."

"What!" said Somerford—"how d'ye mean? *My* mother—what——"

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Anderson, who concluded that Somerford must be acquainted with his own history; "I mean that your mother—but la! dear me! perhaps you don't know the story—you look pale, sir—I am sure I have done wrong—I thought of course you knew the reason why Mr. Maxwell never would consent to—dear sir——"

"Stay! stay!" said Charles, "I shall be quite well in a moment. Don't stir—don't stir—only let me—that is, if it implicates my mother—if any blame is to be cast upon her—if I am to hear anything against her memory, let it be not here, where she lived, where she died, and where I feel her spirit present."

"Oh, sir!" said Mrs. Anderson, "there's no harm going to be said of dear Mrs. Somerford; all that can be said is, that she was not the daughter of those who passed for her parents, but an orphan—perhaps—an orphan—and brought up by them as their child, and always considered so, until, on her death-bed, Mrs. Woodly, of whom you have always heard spoken as your grandmother, confessed that she was not their own; whose child she was, neither she nor your father ever knew."

"And is this the mystery then?" said Somerford; "is this the cause of my eternal separa-

tion from Kate—the wreck and ruin of my hopes—have I been spurned for this?"

"Yes, by Mr. Maxwell," said Mrs. Anderson, "who has bettered his daughter by marrying her to Johnny Apperton, the son of poor Mary Biddle, of the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliff Highway. Often and often did your poor mother say how vexed your father was, that they ever knew so much and yet no more. If old Mrs. Woodly had died and revealed no part of the secret, all would have gone happily; but to tell what she did, and conceal the rest, went to unsettle the minds of both your parents, and to cast a doubt over the legitimacy of your mother, without any one advantage to any human being."

"In what a situation this circumstance places me," said Charles; "but I thank heaven that this accidental discovery throws no blame, no imputation upon the character of my beloved parent. And no clue was left by which to trace her relations?"

"Not the slightest, sir," said Mrs. Anderson. "I don't know sir," continued she, "whether you ever saw a pocket-book of your poor mother's, in which she kept some old letters of your father's, and some—I'll show them to you, sir,"

saying which, she proceeded to open a drawer, where the valuables were stored—" here—here is a little thing that she set great store by, for her dear son's sake."

Saying which, the old gentlewoman deposited upon the table a small and much-worn work-box, containing scissors, thimbles, and the ordinary apparatus of such things.—It was not much to look at; but Somerford, soldier as he was, burst into tears at the sight of it. For years he had seen it close to his mother's hand—a thousand times had he been sent to fetch it, from one room to another for her use, and as often had been rewarded for his little trouble by a kiss.

" And here," added the old lady, " is a book that did belong to *you*, I think, sir, of which she was very fond."

It was a poor shabby looking grammar and spelling-book—on the first page of which was Charles's name, written by himself, as a proof of his skill in penmanship.

From this book his mother had taught him to read; in the margin were the marks yet visible, made with her own pencil, to divide his lessons, and when he saw them, he could recall the events of almost every day in which they had been made, and too well remembered how he stood

beside her knee, and repeated his task, while her arm was fondly placed round his little neck. It brought all her cares and all her kindness to his mind's eye at once; but she was gone for ever, and the sight of all these objects more fully exhibited to poor Somerford, the contrast between her fondness and affection, and the sad and desolate state in which he now stood.

Mrs. Anderson saw how much he was affected; but she saw that the expression of his sorrow gave him relief.

"She was bed-ridden for some months before her death," said the old lady, "so that at last, her departure was a release; she had not been out of this little room for upwards of fifteen weeks before her death," continued the old lady, at the same time pushing open a door by which the apartment they were in, communicated with a neat bedchamber facing the garden.

"And," said Somerford, bursting into an agony of grief which he could not suppress, "did —did she die here?"

The old lady answered him not, but bowed her head.

Charles saw her meaning, and throwing himself on the death-bed of his mother, shed a flood of tears.

And need he be ashamed of such a natural

weakness? No! Tears such as his are no reproach, and leave no stain upon the manly cheek.

The poor old lady, who had thus touched the chord which vibrated through the heart of Somerford, saw with dismay and alarm the effect produced by what she had done; but Charles soon recovered himself, and entreated her to be composed.

"Aye, sir," said she, "if poor dear Mrs, Somerford could know what a kind, affectionate son you are, she would rest happier in her grave. Come, sir, let us leave this room; I was very wrong to show it you—I—"

"No," said Somerford—"no, I shall be better now—I feel my heart relieved; and I am glad to know my friends, the Maxwells, were kind to her to the last. But," added he, evidently wishing to change the subject which had so deeply affected him, "you have strangely unsettled my mind about my family."

"Oh, sir!" said Mrs. Anderson, "why worry about that? Your father was an excellent man, and your mother an exemplary woman; does not that suffice to set your heart at rest? Many of the lords the king makes, would be sadly puzzled, if his Majesty commanded them to find out their grandfathers."

"And yet," said Charles, "it is that blot on my escutcheon which exiled me from England, and lost me Kate for ever. I never can cease to recollect that."

"Perhaps it is all for the best, sir," said the old lady, "we are poor blind creatures, and dare not presume to question the will and ways of Providence. You are now independent, free, and---"

"—— desolate," said Somerford; "in my marriage with Miss Maxwell, I should have secured around me connexions, friends, relations, of which, by your own account, I have none."

"Ay sir, that's more than I can say," said Mrs. Anderson, "or you can say. You may be the king's grandson, for all we know."

Somerford, who thought the supposition savoured somewhat of treason, and whose ambition had never been exalted to so high a pitch, checked his venerable companion in her imaginative flights; and after some farther conversation on indifferent subjects, quitted her, and returned to town, satisfied with his visit, the paying of which seemed, after what had occurred, to have been the fulfilment of a duty, but sadly tormented with the mysterious cloud by which the root of his family tree was

obscured. It entirely unsettled him; every old man he met, he considered, for aught he knew, might be his grandfather; and this visionary relationship so perpetually haunted him, that scarcely did he pass a stranger in the street, without feeling the probability, that he might be his nearest relative upon earth.

Yet amidst all this worry there was something like consolation;—all misery, like all pleasure, is comparative, and Somerford felt satisfied that, disagreeable as was the state of doubt in which he now existed, with regard to his ancestors it was, at all events, far preferable to the wretched certainty of his successful rival, whose descent was not even mysterious, and whose near alliance to the house of Biddle was matter of notoriety to all who knew him in his early days: nor did he, with all his kindness of heart, and smouldering affection for the Maxwells, feel any very great vexation when he reflected upon the total failure of the old gentleman's schemes for Kate's advancement, by rejecting him, and accepting a son-in-law far below him in the scale of legitimacy. How Mr. Maxwell had been induced to play so strange a game, Charles could not very readily comprehend; but from what he had seen he was quite certain

of one thing—that Kate herself had had no participation in the manœuvres by which it had been brought about.

As to the feelings of Maxwell towards Charles, it is but fair to say that they were still most kindly; nor was their natural tendency in his favour at all weakened by the useless discovery of the real state of Apperton's circumstances. The surgeon felt that he had made his daughter completely wretched, by the rejection of the man she fondly loved on a point of pride, and now would have given the world to recall all that had passed. This desire came too late, and yet the operation of the feeling upon Maxwell's mind, was to increase his regard for Somerford—as I have already said, he felt, and was desirous that Kate should feel it quite possible to receive the Captain again as a friend of the family—as one who had in early life been loved, and who now appeared in a different, but scarcely less interesting character. But Kate was fortunate enough to possess a large portion of that rare commodity, common sense; and continued strenuously and decidedly to decline bringing herself to a trial, the result of which could be satisfactory to none of them; so that her father found himself after a long argument with his daughter, eventually

reduced to the necessity she had urged of writing to Charles, in terms of warm friendship and congratulation, but without even hinting at the possibility of their returning to their old intimacy. This letter he despatched to the hotel, and Somerford received it with pleasure, and read its contents without surprise, though not without emotion. He, like Mrs. Apperton, was fully convinced that their acquaintance ought to terminate, although he admitted to himself, that he should be grateful for one short interview, if she felt inclined to grant it, in order to hear from her own lips the details of a change which he could not yet account for, even although in the course of their hurried conversation at Brighton, she had more than hinted that her father's double-dealing with regard to the correspondence, had no small share in bringing about the results so much desired by him, and so much lamented by herself and Somerford.

There could be no question as to the sort of answer Charles should return to Maxwell's letter, and accordingly he sat down and wrote at length an explanation of his views and feelings, together with a statement of his progress in India, his successful career, and the great object of his ambition now so sadly blighted. He added,

that he had been ordered to proceed to Cheltenham, but that when he returned, he should be most happy to take his old protector by the hand, and extremely glad to see Edward, whose stride in life during his absence, had put him, in all probability, beyond his personal knowledge, without a fresh introduction.

The continued absence of Apperton from Brighton was a continued, a great relief to Kate, who found, in the society and conversation of her brother, the necessity for an effort at appearing happy and contented. Indeed she anticipated the return of her husband as one of the most dreadful events that could occur; and all the consolation she had, was talking of Somerford to her brother, who reciprocated her confidence, by bestowing upon her all the tediousness of a lover, while eulogizing his unknown, lost Maria.

"My father," said Edward, "appears to have a vast many secrets; there is the great secret of which you are in possession; there is the secret of this young lady; there is clearly a secret reason for his disinclination to your marriage with Somerford; and from what he threw out at breakfast to day, I'll be hanged if I don't believe there is another secret con-

nected with Apperton. We are grown prodigiously mysterious in our affairs."

"The secret with which I unfortunately have become acquainted," said Mrs. Apperton, "can have no connexion with your secret. And if there is any secret with regard to Charles, most assuredly he is not in it himself, or else I think in those days, when our thoughts and hopes were in common, I should have been mistress of it."

"What an inestimable blessing is candour," said Edward; "all underhanded manœuvering, all crooked politics in families are so debasing, so unworthy: now all this stuff about the young lady—why should I not be trusted? my father says that she is amiable and excellent herself, but that a connexion with her would bring ruin upon *him*, and disgrace upon us all, and yet he walks about the streets with her himself."

"What does he say?" said Katharine, "that a connexion with an innocent and amiable girl would be destruction?"

"He has repeated it over and over again," replied Edward, "and has bound me never to mention the subject again, or even her name."

"Your obedience," said Mrs. Apperton, "does not appear to be quite so scrupulous as mine."

"Oh! but he says," said Edward, "that your secret is, after all, nothing—merely important as a test of your fidelity, but in itself a trifle."

"A trifle!" said Katharine. "Heaven only can tell; at least, I am sure I cannot, what the consequences would be to my father were I to reveal what I saw."

"He speaks," said Edward, "of my adventure with Maria as something extraordinary, as a co-incidence; that if it were written in a romance it would be considered almost impossible: and yet, although she was present at your wedding, of course, upon some principle of affection towards our family, she, of all human beings, is the one with whom any sort of intercourse, on our part, would be destruction."

"Stay," said Kate, a thought evidently flashing like lightning into her mind; "she was in mourning, you said?"

"Yes," said Edward.

"And met my father," murmured Katharine, "and at the church afterwards. I see it all; I know her—the mystery is unravelled—at least I think it must be so—and if it be, it is

as my father says, a most extraordinary circumstance."

"Tell me, my dear Kate," exclaimed Edward, his countenance brightening into a summer sunshine, "tell me, I conjure you, what is it all!

"Never again," said Katharine, "must you mention this subject even to *me*, Edward; and if you love me, as I think you do, never, as you value my peace of mind, or wish me to live happily with our father, hint, in his presence, at what I have inadvertently said. I *do* believe I know who your Maria is; but *you* never must."

"Rely upon it," said Edward, "you are right in your conjecture, Kate, whatever it may be: at least so I consider from the decision to which you have thus rapidly come, as to my never having anything further to say to the young lady; but surely you can tell me whether any tie connects her to our family beyond some circumstance—some—"

"If she be what I suppose," said Kate, "for I have never seen her, and therefore cannot satisfy myself of her identity by your description of her: her tie to us, or rather to our father, is gratitude; and if I can judge another's feelings by my own, gratitude beyond expression.

I *may be* mistaken altogether; for I have never exchanged a syllable on the subject with my father, yet, from his vehemence in denouncing her, mingled with wonder, at the strange coincidence of circumstances which brought you in contact with her, I incline strongly to believe in the justice of my suspicions."

"This is worse than all, Kate," said Edward; "now the tempting fruit actually hangs within my reach, and yet I must not grasp it. Kate, too, with whom I have no disguise, from whom I keep no secret; besides, to this you are not pledged—your father has never bound you to silence on this point, although he has tied me down never to refer to the subject."

"Why did you not obey him?" said Katharine; "if you had not recurred to your Maria, as you call her, and mentioned some new circumstances to me, I never should have guessed, —for after all it is but guess—who she was,—now that you have let me so far into the history, I must, like my parent, entreat you never to urge me on the point again, nor indeed even to recur to it."

"If Apperton," said Edward, "desired you to tell *him*, are you not bound to obey a husband?"

The very name of Apperton, coupled as it

was with the idea of command, in his marital capacity, struck upon Kate's ear like a death-knell: no art, no effort could conceal her feelings towards her "other half," and a silence of some minutes succeeded the question.

To what a state had the commands of her father, and the events of a few days, thus reduced the unhappy Katharine; and how strange,—fortunate she considered it,—was the absolute necessity which had sent the bridegroom away so early in his matrimonial career. It was clear that something preyed heavily upon Maxwell, who now secluded himself from his family, and passed his hours between reflections upon the birth, parentage, and education of his son-in-law, and a feverish anticipation of the results of his financial manœuvrings: every thing seemed to go wrong; and in the whole family there was not to be found one grain of happiness to counterbalance the opposing heap of sorrow and disappointment.

Moss was the only individual of the party who kept the even tenor of his way: indeed, he grumbled rather less, than when there was less cause for dissatisfaction; for Godfrey was one of those persons who are worried by trifles, but whose minds strengthen with the urgency of a

case; and now that he saw real difficulties and embarrassments growing around him, he endeavoured to divert the elder Maxwell's attention from the contemplation of them, and attract Kate's thoughts from the subject by which he was convinced they were wholly occupied. But the blow had not yet fallen, which neither mirth nor philosophy could avert, nor prudence nor energy withstand.

CHAPTER VIII.

Whether we shall meet again I know not;
Therefore one everlasting farewell take,
For ever and for ever farewell, Cassius.
If we do meet again, why we shall smile,
If not, why then this parting was well made.

SHAKSPEARE.

MAXWELL, whose reliance upon Apperton's high credit and responsibility was entire and unqualified, felt considerable relief in receiving the full amount of the balance which he had left in the hands of the insolvent bankers; and related the fact of its arrival to Edward, as a proof of the admirable activity of his son-in-law. This was exactly what Apperton had anticipated; he knew enough, if not of human nature generally, at least of his father-in-law particularly, to be quite sure that he would catch at the little luring bait he had prepared for him, and, while greater events were in pro-

gress, amuse himself with the prospect of security from misfortune which this well timed manœuvre would hold out.

Edward knew nothing of the sort of business in which Apperton was an adept, and Kate of course could form no judgment of financial matters, but she never reverted to the subject of her father's pecuniary engagements with her husband, without thinking of the one brief, but pithy conversation which she had had with him, relative to the great obligations under which the surgeon ought to consider himself for the exertions he had made in his behalf. She could not fail to remember the strange alternative he had in that conversation mentioned; the chances amounting to something which, to her, seemed almost like desperation, to which he had alluded; and when she found that the success of his speculations had not been so very triumphant, her anxious feelings suggested the dreadful reverse which she had ventured to insinuate might occur; and which Apperton himself appeared to look forward to, with fear and trembling.

Kate's situation was, to be sure, most peculiar and most distressing, nor was it rendered at all less irksome by the perpetual remarks and

observations of Moss; who, with all his desire to be civil and even soothing, could not controul the expression of his own satisfaction and triumph at the verification of all his prophecies with respect to the results of the marriage.

Moss, however, was yet in ignorance as regarded the real history of the Cat and Cauliflower, and the state of Mr. Apperton's family connexions: he had once glanced at the subject in a conversation with Maxwell, and offered an opinion that his son-in-law's brains were turned by misfortune; instancing his transient allusion to the sign of the ale-house at Ratcliff Highway, but the surgeon was too much on his guard to give Godfrey one iota more of information than he already possessed, fully convinced that to a man of his turn of mind, the absurdity of the combination would be sufficient to make it matter of constant reference, if he were once in possession of the facts.

Charles Somerford, a few day safter despatching his answer to Maxwell's friendly letter, left London for Cheltenham, in the company and under the advice of Mr. Macleod, who had, for the three previous months of his existence, done little else than talk of the delights and advantages of that popular watering place. If poor

Charles could have foreseen the events which were to occur there, he might, perhaps, have faltered in his determination of taking this journey, and even have hesitated before he decided upon the impossibility of meeting his beloved Kate again.

Three days—three dreadful days, had the Maxwells passed at Brighton; and Apperton's letters gradually became shorter as the week advanced, until, on the fourth morning, his regular despatch did not arrive. This added greatly, as may naturally be imagined, to the restlessness and disquietude of the family, but Moss argued from the omission of writing, the certainty that the stockbrokering boy was coming, an argument which, strange as it may sound, was anything but agreeable to Kate. Maxwell did not at all agree in the conclusion at which Moss had arrived, and seemed to anticipate something beyond their conception, unfortunate in his son-in-law's silence.

The time hung heavily on hand until dinner, and Maxwell was on the point of arranging a journey, either for himself or Edward, to town the next morning, when a knock at the house door announced an arrival. All ears were open, all eyes directed to the entrance of the

dinner parlour; Maxwell was sure it was Apperton; Moss, who firmly believed, though he did not openly say so, that Apperton had destroyed himself, thought it was some messenger to break bad news; Edward himself was agitated, and Kate's heart beat at the rate of two hundred to the minute, because she, like her father, was convinced it was her husband;—the door opened, and the servant, advancing to Mr. Maxwell, whispered, somewhat audibly, that Mr. Biddle had arrived from London, who wished to speak to him.

The name of Biddle, unknown to any one of the party except Maxwell, embodied in itself such a mass of doubts, fears, and antipathies, that its very mention conjured up a host of feelings the most difficult to contend with.

"Where is he?" said Maxwell, "where is the gentleman?"

"I have shown him into the drawing room, sir," said the servant.

"I'll go to him directly, say," said the surgeon.

The servant went.

"Who's your friend, Mack?" said Moss, "who's Biddle?"

Kate, in the midst of her agitation, could

scarcely stifle a laugh at the tone and manner in which Godfrey repeated the very strange patronymic of the new arrival.

" He is a clerk," said Maxwell, " I believe of Apperton's ; I will go and hear what he has to say."

Maxwell left the room pale and trembling, for not only did the arrival of Mr. Biddle in the bosom of his family, agitate him greatly, but he felt quite certain that something very serious had happened to Apperton himself, which induced him to despatch a special messenger to Brighton.

" Something's wrong," said Moss, after Maxwell was gone, and out of hearing ; " Apperton would not have sent if he could have come."

" My dear Mr. Moss," said Kate, " what can have happened ?"

" No matter, Kittums," said Moss ; " you'll be no great loser whatever it is—eh—I'll have one more cut of that mutton, Neddums, grieving's a folly—laugh when you can—eat when you may."

" I wonder," said Kate, " if I might go up stairs, and—"

" No, no," said Moss, " none of your upstairs tricks ; remember the night in London,

when you chose to go up stairs, and found out papa at some of his tricks."

"Moss," said Edward, "let me intreat you spare all this just now. I am sure—certain in my own mind, that something terrible has happened, what I do not pretend to say; but rely upon it, no trifling matter would have brought this confidential person here."

A short time elapsed before Maxwell returned to the room: when he did he appeared calm and composed, but cast down in sorrow; he was accompanied by Mr. Biddle, a vulgar, half dandyish man, with large whiskers, and black hedge-hog hair; the former of which ornaments were full of dust, collected in his journey outside the Regulator, or Magnet stage coach, whichever it might be. Maxwell presented him to the party, and asked him to take wine, an invitation which he, having dined at Crawley, on his road, bowed and accepted, and, grasping a decanter with a huge red hand, on one of the fingers of which, appeared a thick heavy ring helped himself to a bumper of port.

Kate, although silence seemed the order of the day, and nobody felt at liberty to make any general inquiry, thought that she ought to ask after her husband, from whom Mr. Biddle had avowedly and notoriously come, and ac-

cordingly she begged the stranger to tell her how he left Mr. Apperton.

" Quite well, ma'am," said Biddle, " in health, but a good deal worried with business."

" When does he talk of coming down?" said Edward.

" Why," said Biddle, looking extremely foolish, " as to that, I—"

" Oh, not this week, I dare say," said Maxwell, interrupting his guest.

" Any news in London?" said Moss.

" No good news, sir," said Biddle; " three or four extensive failures yesterday, have thrown the city into great confusion. I never saw such times in my life."

A servant, at this juncture, entered the room to know what letters were to go to the post; bellmen in Brighton being unknown at the period to which I am now referring.

" Stay," said Maxwell, " I must write one or two more."

" And, William," said Kate " there is one for Mrs. Dawes on my table, take that."

Mrs. Dawes was Maxwell's housekeeper in Burlington Gardens.

" I must not miss this post, for I want several things down from town, and I—"

"You had better let it be," said Maxwell, "I—"

"Yes, ma'am," said Biddle, "I think you had better let it be."

"I'll explain," said Maxwell, again interrupting his new friend. "I'll take care of your letter, Kate; perhaps I may go up to-morrow, or—"

The mystery which seemed to envelope all the proceedings of the parties in London, began to grow evident and disagreeable, and Moss could not refrain from whispering to her, "there is something wrong, depend on't."

Maxwell having evinced various symptoms of mental uneasiness, rose from his chair, and announced that he was going up stairs to write for an hour, desiring Edward, as he quitted the table, to take care of Mr. Biddle; giving Biddle, at the same time, a hint by signs not to be too communicative on the subject of his visit, during his absence.

"Mr. Biddle," said Edward, "help yourself—and Apperton, I suppose, is good deal harassed by these failures."

"Yes," said Biddle, "he is of a very speculative turn, you know, and has embarked everything of his own, and, indeed, of many other people's in these new concerns."

" But I suppose it will all come right at last," said Moss—" wind up well ?"

" Why, I hope so," said the clerk; " at present it does not look quite so well as one might wish."

" But," said Kate, " Mr. Apperton is well in health ?"

" Yes, ma'am," said Biddle, " very well in health."

" Ah !" said Moss, taking one of his largest pinches of snuff.

" Is he at Burlington Gardens ?" said Edward.

" Why," said Biddle, " I really don't know where he is to day; his mother was with him yesterday, and I think he promised to go to Ratcliff Highway, if he could, to-day."

" His mother !" said Edward.

" Yes," said the clerk; " *his* mother and *my* mother, you know."

" What both ?" said Kate.

" No," said Biddle; " they are the same person, but with two names.

" Ratcliff Highway !" said Moss, half in joke and half in earnest, " what is that the Cat and Cauliflower ?"

" Yes," said Biddle, " the same."

Biddle took it for granted that the whole history of his connexion was known by the Maxwells, and felt himself one of the family.

"The what, Mr. Moss?" said Kate.

"Cat and Cauliflower, Mrs. Apperton," said Godfrey, rubbing his chin, and smiling complacently; "why then the stockbrokering boy is not so mad as I took him to be, after all."

"You know," continued Biddle, "the old gentleman has bound me to silence about what has happened in town; but what's the use of secrecy—the thing must be known; all your furniture in Burlington Gardens has been taken in execution, and the bailiffs are in the house at this minute."

The sudden and abrupt off-hand manner, in which Biddle, grown familiar from the effects of the wine he had swallowed, announced this fact, regardless of Maxwell's injunctions, almost overcame poor Kate.

"What, sir!" said she, "bailiffs in our house —what does it mean?"

"Why," said Biddle, "the old gentleman up stairs has given bonds and judgments over and over again; and upon one of these for a good

large sum, a greedy devil of a fellow, anxious to be first in at the death, has laid hold of the personals."

"I say, master Ned," said Moss, "who is right now?"

"But," said Edward, "my father has abundance of property to answer all demands upon him."

"My belief is," said Biddle, helping himself to a third bumper as he spoke, "that the old gentleman has not got a five shilling piece left to bless himself with."

"Merciful heaven, sir!" said Kate, "are you trifling with our feelings—or can this be true?"

"Oh, it is true enough," said Biddle—"true as gospel; and what's worse than that, I don't see how he is ever to recover a farthing: the kite system has been going on at a great rate, and so has the bolstering scheme, but neither will do any longer."

"Kites and bolsters," said Moss, "what jargon is that?"

"And is my father ruined," said Kate, bursting into tears.

"Ruined is a strong term, ma'am," said Biddle; "I suppose he has got the use of his eyes and his hands; so if he just toddles over the

water for a few weeks, he'll come out white-washed, and may begin business again."

"Is this raillery, sir," said Edward, "or are you serious? because if the former, you carry the joke somewhat too far; and if the latter, your want of feeling and delicacy are beyond endurance;—do you recollect, sir, to whom you are addressing yourself?"

"To be sure, sir," said Biddle; "to the family of which my half-brother Apperton is one."

"Half-brother," murmured Kate, through her tears, who, although she certainly felt no enthusiastic affection for the stockbroker, held him in infinitely higher estimation than the clerk.

"Yes, ma'am, half-brother," said the clerk, colouring up, and looking at once angry and impudent, "as you know, ma'am; for my brother told me, only yesterday, he had explained the whole of our family connexion; and I say I see no cause to be afraid of speaking out in the company of one's own relations, nor any reason why I, who am the lawful son of my mother, should stoop to John Apperton, who is not."

The amazement of the family groupe at this tirade kept them silent, even while Biddle continued.

"And as for *that*, I say *now*, and I'll say it again, the honest landlord of the Cat and Cauliflower is a better man than the speculator who ruins himself, and every body round him, by building castles in the air."

The situation of poor Kate at the end of this speech, may be better conceived than described. The impulse by which Edward was affected, would have induced him to expel his new connexion in a summary manner; but Moss, who knew that there was something true, as well as important, in the mystic sign of the Cat and Cauliflower, endeavoured to soothe the lady, while he extracted a few more historical facts from Biddle; but his efforts were frustrated by the entrance of Maxwell himself, who instantly perceived, by the appearance of the party, that something unpleasant had happened.

"What is the meaning of this?" said Maxwell; "what has occurred—Kate, in tears?"

"Why, sir," said Edward, "this person has been pleased, under the influence of wine, I conclude, to exhibit so much insolence and ill-breeding, and to declare our present state in such coarse and unfeeling terms, that I——"

"You need not make a speech, Mr. Maxwell," said Biddle; "I know you are a mighty

proud set, and Apperton knows it too; but proud as you are, your pride has had a fall; and I verily believe, if it had not been for the persuasion of your father, my brother-in-law would have been as good a man as any of you."

"Sir," said Maxwell, in a voice of mingled rage and grief, "you forget yourself—your busisiness was simply with *me*—you were sent here as the clerk of your employer—I wished to treat you kindly and civilly, but I warned you not to allude to business—the sooner you quit my house the better."

"*Your* house, sir," said Biddle; "if it was your house, you dare not stay in it—nor would you have a chair to sit on, or a bed to lie in—but I require no second bidding, sir, to go out of your—ready furnished lodging, sir."

"Kate, my love, leave the room," said Maxwell; "Edward, take care of your sister."

"Oh, I dare say I am not fit company for her," said Biddle: "recollect, however, she is my brother's wife—yes, the wife of the brother who has risked every thing to keep you out of prison at this very moment—don't stir, ma'am, I am going—you may stop where you are—I shall return to London to-night, and give John a faithful history of my reception, and we will

see, before four-and-twenty hours are over our heads, whether he will submit to be made the tool of a set of proud upstarts, who haven't a guinea in the world to bless themselves with."

Saying which, the barbarian saved Edward the disagreeable task of kicking him out of the room, by making a retreat, which he did without taking the slightest notice of any one of the party.

"I say, Mack," said Moss, when the monster was well out of hearing, "this is all very pretty, but what the deuce does it mean?"

"Why," said Maxwell, "it means, Moss, that I am utterly undone by the failure of Apperton's schemes for my enrichment; and it follows, that I am doomed to be trampled upon by his relations."

"And is that man a relation of *his?*" said Kate.

"You must know all in time," said Maxwell; "I have been blinded, duped, deceived, and you have been betrayed; but this is not the moment to recount all my miseries; a day's reprieve is only granted me. This very night I must fly the country, which I thought never to have left. Apperton's arrangements are made; he thinks things, perhaps, may be accommodated to a certain extent; but not if I am once arrested. The house and furniture in London

are gone. There are judgments against me for upwards of thirty thousand pounds; and they are not to be resisted. To-morrow will be Sunday; that alone gives me four-and-twenty hour's breathing time, a period not likely to be extended, especially after this squabble with his vulgar brother-in-law."

"But where can we go?" said Edward.

"You need not go with me," said Maxwell.

"*I will*," said Kate, "to the very farthest end of the world."

"Your husband will claim your society here," said Maxwell.

"My father demands my care," said Kate.

"And the stockbroker," said Moss, "can find plenty of solace and society at the Cat and Cauliflower. Oh! Mack! Mack! what have I said of that wooden-headed cretur?—what did I foretell?"

"It serves no purpose," said the surgeon, "to recur to what is past—what is done, cannot be undone."

"For my part," said Moss, who could not resist joking in the worst of times, "I believe you have been done, and undone too, by him."

"Upon one thing I am resolved," said Kate; "no power shall induce me to quit my father."

' Unless," said Edward, " your husband insists upon your staying."

" That is arranged," said Maxwell; " since Kate has thus nobly expressed her determination, I will set her heart at rest on that point. Apperton has directed our course, and made arrangements accordingly. Madeira is the place of our destination; thither he advises me to take Kate; thither he will certainly follow us; and thither I particularly desire to go, from having a friend there, upon whose kindness I can rely."

" What a strange thing," said Moss, " is the human mind! Here you are at sixty, or whatever it is, ruined and without a shilling in the world, calmly talking of rooting yourself out of your native soil, and crossing the Bay of Biscay, as if it were the result you had expected to your fine speculations."

" My dear Moss," said Maxwell, " I place my trust in Providence, and meet the evils of this world with faith and hope; what has happened is the fruit of a worldly ambition. I wished to give that poor fellow there a better fortune than I could otherwise have done."

" And that poor fellow," said Edward, running to his father's arms, " will follow your fortunes too, wherever they lead you."

"Moss," said Maxwell, "I suppose we part with you to-morrow, perhaps for ever?"

"Yes, Maxwell," said Godfrey, "I am no sailor—you 'll abandon me, lamenting on the shore, like the old hen, who sees her brood of ducks swim over the pond, and leave her on the bank."

"You will sometimes think of us," said Kate.

"I think I shall, Katharine," said Godfrey; "but as yet I have n't had time to think about it, the blow has fallen so suddenly—'tis but a dream—I cannot fancy myself awake—I don't believe it real."

"We have no time for thinking," said Maxwell, "we must act; and it is a great blessing that, in all cases of emergency, it is necessary to exert our energies to meet the difficulty, which prevents the mind from inertly dwelling upon its miseries."

"The subject that principally occupies my mind at this moment," said Edward, "is the insolence of that fellow. What does he call himself—Biddle? I never—"

"Stifle that resentment," said Maxwell; "we shall have leisure to talk over *his* insolence, when we are beyond the reach of his malice. The pride of little minds sometimes leads to the

commission of the deadliest injuries; and if we had not the day of rest to-morrow, which the law itself may not violate, I should feel more uneasy at the apprehension of what that man's injured dignity might induce him to commit, than any greater evil."

"But the servants," said Kate, "in London?"

"They are dismissed," said Maxwell, "with the exception of Dawes, who, being permitted to carry with her all your articles of dress and personal property, will meet us at Portsmouth, for which place, early to-morrow, we must start, so as to be on board the vessel pointed out by Apperton, before Monday morning, when she sails."

"We shall have but short sea stock of clothes," said Edward.

"What matters?" said Moss, "why, one shirt will do; you won't be more than a fortnight getting to Madeira, and who is to see you on board ship?"

"My mind is made up to any thing," said Kate, "now that I am not to be separated from my father,"—and her thoughts glanced at the moment to Somerford, in which mingled a desire, at the last hour, to write one brief letter to him. She was now about to be so decidedly parted

from him, so eternally alienated from him in this world, that the most scrupulous judge in existence could not have decided against the impulse which she felt. Selfishness was a crime of which her heart was innocent, and she wished to stifle the desire she felt, until she had an opportunity of consulting her father, without whose sanction she determined not to gratify it.

"Well!" said Moss, as if catching the connexion of her thoughts, "I only wish one thing—that Charles Somerford had married Katharine, and that the stockbroker had been hanged before you knew him."

Maxwell entreated his friend, on the last evening they were to pass together, perhaps for ever, not to rake up old grievances, especially as it was absolutely necessary to collect their spirits, and make their arrangements for the morrow; and, by any body but Godfrey Moss, such a request would have scarcely been required. Here was the respectable, excellent Maxwell, who for years had been looked up to and esteemed by a numerous circle of society, beggared and driven into exile by one of the most sudden blows that can fall, having always in his mind the reflection, that he himself had caused the overthrow of his fortune, and the destruction

of his child's happiness, by a blind adherence to the romantic expedients of an ignorant, unlettered man, himself the dupe of greater capitalists, who, having secured their own property, lived upon the wretched victims of their vice, and, strong in their resources, even ridiculed those whom they had first inveigled and destroyed.

The evening passed wretchedly; the wind whistled along the cliffs, and shook the fragile windows of the house; and Kate, who, like all uninitiated people, deduce from the fact of there being a breeze in any particular part of England, the dreadful certainty of a gale of wind affecting their friends in the Pacific or Atlantic; shuddered at the perils they were destined so soon to brave, when exposed to the power of the warring elements next day.

Strange it is, but true, though not complimentary to Apperton, that, in the midst of all her regrets, she never lamented her husband's absence. In their short intercourse as man and wife, selfishness had so distinctly characterized his disposition, that she felt relieved rather than pained by his absence. It might have been that her feelings would not have taken a tone so decided, if Somerford had not so inopportunely arrived; but when she once beheld

him, all the rules she had laid down for her conduct, all the resolutions she had made as to the regulation of her mind, and the mode of passing her life, were put to flight; and to this change a decided disaffection, I might almost say hatred, of Apperton, succeeded. It is perhaps only a woman of strong feelings and sensitive mind who can appreciate such a sentiment, or understand such a feeling as I wish to express—the very kindnesses of Apperton were repulsive, and the slightest marks of his affection, hateful.

Edward had quitted the house, to breathe, perhaps for the last time, his native air, and Moss had gone to visit his smoking friend upon the Steyne, in order to ascertain whether he could give him what he called a "beddums" when Maxwell was gone; and Kate and her father were left alone. It was then that Maxwell explained to her the various allusions to the public-house at Ratcliffe Highway, and the mingled families of Apperton and Biddle. Then it was that the tears chased each other down his furrowed cheeks as he implored her forgiveness for having caused the ruin of her hopes. Then it was he related to her the true reason of his disinclination to the match with

Somerford, and then confessed that her fortune, which ought to have been secured to her, and placed her above the powers of fate, had been all swallowed up in the general ruin.

Oh! it was a grievous sight to see the grey-headed old man imploring his daughter's pardon —it was a dreadful wreck of all his proud ambitious hopes to find himself the ruined father of a beggared family, actually at the mercy of his son-in-law even for common subsistence; but then it was cheering to behold the affectionate Kate drying her father's tears, and imploring him to be calm and composed, and place his trust in heaven—from the bottom of her heart *she* forgave him all, and would devote her life to prove her duty and affection towards him; all she asked was leave to write her last farewell to Charles. "No word of love shall mingle in my sad adieu," said Kate; "it is banished from my heart for ever; but to redeem my character, to vindicate myself from the imputation of fickleness and falsehood, to breathe the purest wishes for his happiness, is all I ask."

"It must not be, my child;" said Maxwell, "our situation is so perilous, that a clue once

given by such a letter might be destruction; at present, although my embarrassments are fatal, they are unknown publicly. If you in your address to Somerford, hint at the probably eternal separation between you, it will lead perhaps to some inquiry—some explanation, the consequences of which might be ruinous—write to him when we are safe, from our asylum, wherever it may be. In the island to which Apperton has recommended us to go, there is a man, a merchant of some eminence, who owes me a debt of gratitude; there we shall be at all events secure from the storm of failures, and there you can address yourself to Charles."

Kate was, of course, compelled to submit to circumstances, and forego the desire nearest her heart; but having obtained her father's consent to write eventually, it served her as something to look forward to, on the stormy horizon by which they were surrounded, she little dreaming of the events by which her after life were to be affected. It was, however, something to have achieved, and she felt pleased that she had opened her heart, and that her wish had not been deemed improper.

But when she began to reflect upon the con-

nexion she had been so unhappily forced into, all the pecuniary consequences to her father, brother, and herself, seemed light by comparison with her indissoluble tie to the family of her husband. Kate was not proud, but when she reflected, that reduced as she was in fortune, and linked as she was to a husband also ruined in his circumstances, what her situation must be if she lost (as in the ordinary course of nature she might be presumed to do) her beloved father, she could not but tremble; she would sink into the connexion, and perhaps compulsorily become the associate of the Biddle family, who, from the specimen she had seen exhibited, she anticipated might consider themselves conferring a high favour in granting her their protection.

She had two maiden aunts in the north of Scotland, both older than her father, and both, it was more than probable, deriving their income from his professional exertions. To them she could scarcely look with any thing like hope, and Edward, her next natural protector after her husband, was by the circumstances which involved his family, thrown out of the channel of his profession, at all events for a time. Never, indeed, did ruin more sudden, or

more complete fall upon a devoted family; the mere recapitulation of their distresses seemed like a reproof to her parent, and the unfortunate Katharine, still hoping, prayed that he might be spared the miseries of actual want, and that whenever death closed his troubled career, she too might end her days.

Moss and Edward returned to the house nearly together; and Moss, who with all his *brusquerie* and bluntness, had a kind heart, gave the most decisive proof of the state of his feelings by letting ten o'clock go by, without whispering the word supper, although his dinner had been somewhat abbreviated by the arrival of Apperton's clerk.

He, however, was not forgotten, and never, in Maxwell's house had that meal been put down under such trying circumstances. It was the last time perhaps they should ever be assembled round the same table—it was the last repast they should take together; nay, to the Maxwells it was the last night perhaps they should ever pass in England. Nothing alleviated the weight of their sorrow, but the suddenness of its arrival, and the imperious necessity for ex-

ertion, and of all the party who braved the storm, Kate was the firmest; cleaving to her father, she felt she derived new strength; without him, like the ivy torn from the oak, she would have sunk to the earth, and have been trampled on; but twined round the parent stem, she seemed to gain new strength and freshness by the difficulties which threatened them; at least, such was her strength of mind, that if some woman's fears assailed her, she overcame them, and set a good example to her comrades in distress, of bearing up against inevitable misfortune. There are points and incidents in our lives, trivial in themselves, but which affect us more than mightier events; and it was not until the moment of separation for the night, that Maxwell appeared to sink under his calamities; it was a separation so dissimilar to the hundreds of partings which had preceded it, when the events of the following day would bring the friends and companions together again; to night, for the last time, they slept under the same roof, and all after to night was blank, vague, dark, and uncertain.

It was a fortunate circumstance amongst the distressing ones, that the Maxwells had left their house—their usual place of residence, be-

fore it was seized upon. Kate, as she pressed her solitary pillow, could not but think of the hours she had passed in her favourite *boudoir*, now pulled to pieces by the hands of merciless creditors—stripped of its well-known furniture, ultimately to be sold to any buyer who might offer. It appeared that Apperton had made all the necessary arrangements with respect to the property exempted from the effects of the execution; but his selections had not been guided by taste or feeling; he saw no charms in a favourite picture, nor associated any pleasing ideas with familiar objects, in the shape of plate or furniture; he secured what the law permitted him to save; he put that portion of their valuables under the care of Mrs. Dawes, who for many years had acted in the capacity of assistant housekeeper to Katharine. She, poor body, was too infirm and too old to follow the fortunes of the family farther than the coast; but thither she had Apperton's directions to proceed, to meet her master and young mistress.

The clock struck twelve before the members of the once happy family separated; it was a scene not to be described—little was spoken but the hearts of each were full, and heavy—

each after its fashion. Of all, Maxwell felt the deepest sorrow; the others wept for the ruin of the house, but Maxwell wept doubly, for that he had been the cause of it. And so they parted.

CHAPTER IX.

"Beneath the trembling main the sky was clear,
And wing'd our course with slender airs, we sail'd,
Till strait, as evening fell, the fluttering gale,
Increasing gradual from the red north-east,
Blew stiff and fierce; at last the tempest howl'd.
Next morning nought but angry seas and skies
Appeared, conflicting round. Meantime right on,
Our strong-ribb'd vessel drove before the blast,
That falling something of its fury, gave us
A quick auspicious voyage."

THOMSON.

JUST as the Maxwells were stepping into the carriage which was to convey them to Portsmouth, Somerford was stepping into the Cheltenham stage-coach, perfectly unconscious of the ruin of the family from which he had been so cruelly excluded; and although the young soldier was free from the trammels of debt and difficulties, his heart was not with him. Still, still it lingered at Brighton, and he felt that every mile the foaming horses dragged him

westward, he was so much further from the only place in the world at which he wished to be. But he had obeyed the dictates of honour, and even if he had wavered in his good resolution, he could not now retrace the course he had pursued.

It was early when the Maxwells quitted their residence; the morning was fine, the air fresh, the sky clear, and the very circumstance of moving and changing the scene was something desirable. With what different feelings had Kate before now, left Brighton! and yet all her fortitude was summoned to support her father. They waited only for their letters. Apperton had forwarded another remittance to Maxwell, and a new and more explicit code of instructions. In short, from the clear and perspicuous manner in which the whole programme was arranged, it appeared to Maxwell that the expectation, on his part, of their being obliged to emigrate was not of a very recent date. All thoughts of past events were useless, and he resolved to obey his son-in-law's instructions. Godfrey took an affectionate leave of them, and the family party, with Mrs. Alsop and Maxwell's man on the dicky, found themselves rolling along towards Worthing, at a very little after ten o'clock.

Their progress to Portsmouth was not interrupted by any accident, although Kate's heart sometimes swelled, as she saw the happy and well-dressed inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, going to and returning from church; while in others, the open doors of the clean cottages, at which were seated the contented labourer, surrounded by his laughing children, displayed all the comforts of humble life, and exhibited a striking lesson to those who, possessing ample means, and an almost splendid income, go the length of risking all they have, in order to obtain more than they want.

It was not to be expected that the journey would be any thing but a wretched and unhappy one. The separation of a family in a few hours—the scattering them on the surface of the waters—the *eclat* which the circumstances, when they became known, would occasion—in short, silence seemed the order of the day, and each of the travellers was occupied with thinking, according to his different views and feelings, of the probable results of the expedition.

It was about half-past four o'clock in the afternoon when they reached Portsmouth, and were

driven to the Crown Inn, where they were received by Mrs. Dawes, who had been there since the night before, waiting their arrival. She burst into tears at the sight of her ancient master and his downcast daughter, whose surprise was considerably excited, when she heard her father inquire if the house at Ryde was ready for their reception.

The housekeeper answered in the affirmative; and it became a question of whether they should take some refreshment, or proceed directly to the water-side, where, they were informed, a boat was ready to take them across as soon as they arrived. The simplicity of manner with which Mrs. Dawes acted her part in this strange drama, quite deceived Mrs. Apperton; who began to cling to the hope that the whole affair had been magnified, and that merely a short seclusion in the beautiful Isle of Wight would supersede the necessity of a voyage to an island still more beautiful it is true, but with which she associated nothing of home —nothing of that country which held her husband and—Somerford.

Maxwell, however, decided for starting immediately, so that the carriage might go down to the square in front of the Quebec Tavern, off

which the steam-packet was lying, and the luggage be forthwith transferred to the vessel. Mrs. Dawes, to whom, as it appeared, all the arrangement of this underplot had been consigned, gave her master to understand that she had not delayed her business nor been idle during the day; for that all the articles with which she had been charged were safe in the house, and ready for their use. She then gave Maxwell a list of those articles, and where he would find them; and handed to Kate some bundles of letters and private papers, which she had saved out of the wreck in London.

Things being so far arranged, to Mrs. Apperton's perfect amazement, she found herself handed out of the carriage into the boat, and thence to the packet. Maxwell having given the post-boys directions to take the chariot back to the Crown, and let it remain there, until further orders; such being the tenor of his instructions from Apperton. Edward followed his sister into the boat mechanically, not in the least comprehending the course which his father was pursuing, but doing exactly as he was bid without question or comment.

On the edge of the water, the faithful Dawes took her leave and returned to the Crown,

where she was to sleep, and thence, on the following day, to prosecute her journey to London. Alsop and the man-servant remaining with the family, but as yet entirely unconscious of their destination, and fondly believing that some sudden whim had seized their master, and that he had resolved off-hand to change the sun and dust of Brighton for the shade and verdure of the Isle of Wight.

Once on board the steamer, no time was lost in getting her under way—the water bubbled, the pistons worked, the chimney smoked, and the paddles splashed, and Kate, who had never before ventured her fair person in a similar vessel, felt interested and excited by the motion and the progress they made, still hoping that the Isle of Wight was to be the end of their voyage, but yet obeying the injunction of her father to ask no questions, and to make no observations touching their own proceedings in the presence of anybody else. Three-quarters of an hour terminated their *trajet*, and they found themselves, within sixty minutes of leaving Portsmouth, seated in the Bugle Inn at Ryde, waiting for the coming out of a sociable and pair, in which and about which, they were to betake themselves to Cowes.

When Kate heard this order given, and saw the luggage again packed into another carriage, her heart failed her, and she lost the bright spark of hope with which she had hitherto solaced herself. It was clear there was no house at Ryde; it was therefore most probable there would be no house at Cowes prepared for their reception. However, all she had to do was to agree with everybody, and follow the stream. The sociable appeared; the drivers were mounted; the passengers stowed; and away the fugitives went, amidst the bows of master, mistress, waiters, and chambermaids.

Along that beautifully undulating road to Wooton did the carriage roll; and at any other period, with what rapture would Kate have gazed on the varying scenery through which they passed; but whatever their feelings might be during the present part of the journey, it was requisite to keep perfect silence as to its object, since it had been found necessary to pack up Mrs. Alsop in the inside of the vehicle. In due course of time, they reached and drove through Newport, and turned off to the seaport, where the house was situated to which they were going. Four miles more of sweet country, just in the dusk of a spring evening,

brought them to Cowes, where they suddenly stopped at the door of the Vine Inn; and where, as was the case at Portsmouth, it appeared they were expected; for a man, in a sailor's dress, stepped from the doorway to open the carriage, and touching his hat to Maxwell, made him at once comprehend that *he* was the person to be spoken to, on business.

The roseate hostess speedily ushered the mystified Kate and her brother into a comfortable room, facing the harbour; and there it was agreed that they should dine, it being now nearly seven o'clock. What was to occur afterwards, the younger branches of the family could only surmise. One thing alone seemed certain, that they were destined to sleep on board the vessel which was to convey them to their destination.

The repast was speedily prepared: it was none of the finest, nor were the appetites of the parties calculated for its enjoyment, even if it had been; for sorrow filled their hearts, and the contemplation of the void before them occupied their thoughts.

It was nearly nine o'clock when the same man who had opened the carriage for them entered the room where they were sitting, after having respectfully tapped at the door.

"The boat's ready, sir," said he to Maxwell.

"The luggage—"

"Is on board, sir," replied the man—"all but the young woman's—the young lady's maid—she won't part with her boxes and things."

"Why?" said Maxwell.

"I don't know, sir," said the man; "she is crying below stairs, and says she can't go to foreign parts."

"Send her here," said Maxwell; "we shall be ready in ten minutes ourselves."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the man, and retired.

"Is this," said Maxwell, "your faithful maid, Kate, who hesitates to accompany you on your voyage?"

"Poor girl!" said Kate, "it is not very surprising. She has no object to gain by going, and she gives up all her friends, connexions, home—"

"She travels," said Maxwell; "and what can a person in her situation do better? However, the thing is unimportant, except as you may be inconvenienced. Give her her wages, and dismiss her. Williams can pay her; but I suppose you will like to bid her good-bye, after six or seven years knowledge of her.—I 'll send for her."

Saying which, Maxwell rang the bell, and directed the waiter to send his servant Williams to him.

"Well," said Edward, "I *do* think, Kate, considering the exalted opinion you had of Mrs. Alsop's affection for you, she has not turned out quite so devoted as might have been expected."

"Those of this world are worldly, Ned," said Maxwell; "we must not look for miracles—Williams," continued the surgeon, addressing his man, who had entered the room, "I find that Mrs. Apperton's maid declines accompanying her mistress on our little excursion."

"Yes, sir," said Williams, "she does; she says she is not used to the sea, and knows nothing of foreign parts, and prefers staying at home; and as she was not engaged to travel abroad, she would rather not."

"Oh, she must follow her own inclinations," said Maxwell; "you may tell her, that her mistress will speak to her, and then, when her business is settled, you will collect the cloaks and coats, and we must go on board."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Williams—"I am very sorry to say what I am going to

say—but I really cannot go with you. You did not tell either Mrs. Alsop or me, what was going to happen, and, for all we knew, we were only coming here to stay."

"What, Williams, and do you leave me too!" said Maxwell.

"Why, sir," said Williams, "I am very sorry,—I have been with you many years, but—I—have an objection to travel—and Mrs. Alsop, sir—and—I—"

"Oh, agree upon that point," said Maxwell.

"Why yes, sir," said Williams, looking rather foolish; "Mrs. Alsop, sir, as you call her, of course guides me, seeing that she is my wife, sir."

"Married!" said Kate.

"Yes, ma'am," said Williams, more than five months; and so as she won't go, I can't well leave her; and we mean to stop in England and try to better ourselves. We have been in service a long while, and—"

"Better yourselves!" said Maxwell; "by what means can persons better themselves, who have to pay neither for rent nor for taxes, nor for food nor for clothing, and who have a certain income to receive?"

"Why, sir," said Williams, "that's very true; but the same thing may be said of the niggers

in the West Hingies, who are rather better off than we; but still, after working for others for a long time, it's agreed to set up for oneself."

"And pray," said Kate, curious to ascertain what particular vocation her maid and her maid's husband had chosen, in order to realize a fortune, "what business do you propose to follow?"

"Why, Ma'am," said William, "I have been in treaty for a public-house down by Ratcliffe Highway; and now you are all going to leave England, I think I shall strike the bargain."

The words were magical — Kate coloured crimson; her father turned pale—it might be—it was not probable—but it was just possible, that the snug retirement of their seceding servants was the Cat and Cauliflower; the family mansion of the Biddles and Appertons—the bare mention of the trade and situation put a stop to all further questions.

"Well, well," said Maxwell, "of course you must follow your own inclinations: circumstances prevented my explaining that I was about to leave the country, so that I have only myself to blame for being left without servants. —Come, Kate, we must be going—if you wish to see Alsop, go and bid her farewell; the

boat is ready, and we must not keep it waiting."

Kate proceeded to take leave of her *faithful* handmaid, and Williams, having rendered a due account of the monies entrusted to his care, was paid the joint wages of himself and his wife; and the Maxwells, having walked down to the steps on the Parade, embarked by moonlight in the boat for the vessel which was destined to bear them to scenes of new interests, new sorrows, and new adventures.

The effect produced upon Edward by the sudden change in the circumstances of his family was most extraordinary—he murmured not—he spoke not—he sat or moved in silence, implicitly obeying the slightest wish of his father—he seemed to have sunk into a despondency, from which nothing could rouse him: he fancied himself doomed to a life of poverty and misery, and to have lost the power of struggling with misfortune. On the subject of his Maria, to the recollection of whom he clung with pure devotedness, he dared not speak to his father, oppressed as he saw him by sorrows of his own; and if he had violated his parent's command never to allude to that subject again, what object was there to be gained: he was told a con-

nexion with her would be destruction; and all that seemed like hope about the affair was derivable from the alteration in his own circumstances, which might, by lowering him in the scale of society, obviate some of the objections which his father had declared to exist to a continuation of their acquaintance previous to his fall.

As for Moss, he was left helpless at Brighton; taken far from his London haunts, and still farther from his Lincolnshire pursuits, he knew not what to do; he affected to joke at the surgeon's being obliged to *cut* and run, but he was deeply and seriously affected by his friend's misfortunes; it was a sort of break up, that unsettled and unhinged him: and he twaddled about Brighton, because he could not exert himself, to leave it until the end of the week, in the beginning of which, they took their departure.

But to return to our poor friends themselves. The evening was mild and moderate, and after half an hour's pulling through a calm sea, they reached the brig which was to convey them to Madeira. On boarding her, the same well regulated arrangements appeared to have been made, and every body was prepared to receive

the party. When Kate, however, discovered that she was the only female on board, the ingratitude of Mrs. Williams, *ci-devant* Alsop, struck her forcibly—if ingratitude that feeling can be called, which induces a woman to prefer her native country, and the society of her husband, to a perilous voyage, and an unknown land.

Conceive the embarrassment of poor Kate—an embarrassment rendered more grievous from the suddenness of the transition from a comfortable, not to say luxurious home, where every want and wish had been anticipated.

The difficulty, however, about female attendance might be overcome. One of the crew, a Cowes man, would be glad enough that his "old wumman," as he called his wife, should accompany him on the voyage, and act as servant to the young lady; but then she could not get on board until the morning: she had to pack up her things, and dispose of her little cottage, and get somebody to take care of her furniture. Still it seemed so impossible to Katharine that she could endure the duties of housemaid to be performed by a red-headed boy in a hairy cap, tarred canvass trowsers, and a particularly dirty blue jacket, that the delay to her appeared no-

thing, compared with the escape from perpetual misery and inconvenience.

Maxwell had other feelings on the subject, which he could not exactly declare; and without doing so, he could hardly oppose his daughter's desire for an accommodation which decency, not to say comfort, seemed imperatively to demand—his dread was of the detention of the vessel while within reach of the laws of England; he had a confused idea of "*ne exeats*," and moreover a fear of that little implement, which, though fashioned as if for accelerating a voyage, has not unfrequently put an end to one; namely, the "silver oar," by virtue of which, the anxious refugee from his country on suspicion of debt, may be brought back and lodged in safe custody, to be baited by his creditors at large. The surgeon resolved, however, to stifle all selfish alarms, and run any personal hazard, rather than expose his poor child to the misery she so naturally anticipated.

Accordingly he requested the master of the brig to let his boat take the Cowes Benedick on shore, in order that it might bring off his Beatrice and her bundles as soon as possible; and then it was that he became convinced, that the man who commanded the vessel was perfectly

aware of his motives to the voyage, and the peculiar delicacy of his situation. He, of himself, suggested to Maxwell the necessity of getting up his anchor at daylight, and standing on and off the harbour. "Because," said he, "when we are once adrift, if any of these land sharks should come out after us, why we can up helm and away; then neither crocodile nor alligator can catch us."

"How do you mean?" said Maxwell.

"Why, I mean this," replied the sailor, "I look upon counsellors and attornies just as I look upon alligators and crocodiles; they are of the same genus, but only a different species, and I hate them. I was once ruined by law myself, and I'll run all hazards before any of the Does or Roes set foot on board my craft. John Apperton and I are not new friends, Mr. Maxwell; if we were, I should not have been freighted with you; so confidence is every thing —and now we understand one another."

It is impossible to describe the force of the shock, which a man of delicate feelings and gentlemanly habits, receives in the first advance of even a well meaning inferior, who lets him understand that he is in the secret of his difficulties, and proffers his assistance and con-

fidence as to the best mode of meeting them. Maxwell felt degraded, debased, lost. His pride and his ambition, as Mr. Biddle said, had, indeed, a fall. He had been recommended to the protection of a man who was the master of a little merchant brig, in order to ensure whose favour and care, the knowledge of his ruin and misfortunes had preceded him. Nobody can comprehend the shuddering sensation which affected Maxwell when he made this discovery. He began, however, to believe, either that Apperton had been much longer anticipating the evil result of his speculations, and had prepared the present means of escape some considerable time previous, or that the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange maintained a sort of subscription yacht, ready at a moment's notice, to carry them out of the reach of danger and difficulty. He knew that one of the greatest of the profession did keep a vessel to himself, and what he had just seen led him to imagine it not impossible that the smaller fry supported a joint stock brig for speculative expeditions.

"I don't think it would do," continued Hilton, (such was the captain's name,) "for your daughter to sail with us without a woman, seeing she has been used to it, and therefore we'll

contrive to get one for her; but to say truth, I was not prepared for her coming."

"Did not Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, "mention her."

"No," said Hilton, "he seemed to think she would stay behind; but, however, she is better where she is. He is too deep in the mire ever to get out; of *that* I am sure; and he would only have left her in the mud, if she had staid. We were to have gone to Lisbon," added he, "but he tells me you prefer Madeira, because you know somebody there, and you are right. Madeira is a fine island; there you'll have good English society, a healthy climate, and a short run home when you are able to return; and too happy shall I be to bring you back again, if it may ever be."

It was to be gathered from this conversation, that Apperton had thought it possible Kate would remain; it was clear from his conduct, and the short, hurried notes he had written to her during his absence, and from his not having written at all, when the necessity of flight was announced, that he did not particularly wish it; but it might have been, that his half-brother, Biddle, had been charged with some communication when he went to Brighton,

which the unexpected and stormy termination of his visit to the family circle might have checked. At all events, Kate had now made her decision, and was safe from the vicissitudes of life in London, and secure with her father, to whom, in spite of his admitted, yet perhaps well-meant, duplicity with respect to Charles, she remained, as we have already seen, a true, faithful and affectionate daughter.

When poor Kate, unattended and alone, huddled herself for the night into a standing bed-place in her little cabin, and heard the water ripple by the side of her head as she rested it on a board-like pillow, her thoughts reverted to Charles; and unused to nautical matters as she was, she reconciled herself to her own miserable position on board a small merchant brig, by comparing her sorrows with those which she fancied he must have suffered in an East Indiaman of twelve hundred tons, in which, if there had been water enough, Cleopatra herself might have been happy to navigate the Cydnus.

Edward "turned in" in silence, and with a heart loaded with sorrow, yet, like his sister, he resolved to sacrifice everything to his duty, and determined, when once the voyage began, to

look at every thing on its bright side, and live on in hopes of better days.

The morning dawned, and the anchor was weighed. Hilton was on deck watching the progress of the jolly-boat pulling ashore. The sun shone, and the wind was favourable for their starting. Hilton calculated that until the arrival of the mail from Southampton they were safe, as to pursuit; for although there was no post on the Monday, if any person had come down in pursuit of Maxwell, it would have been during the night; and he resolved, if they were detained until the steamer made her appearance, that he would near her, so as to command her deck with his glass, having, as he said to Maxwell, a sort of intuitive knowledge of the class of persons whose arrival he thought might be looked for; for it was clear that the ruin of Maxwell would very speedily be known in London, and that a chace for precedence of payment would most probably take place, by securing his person, however fruitless the struggle might eventually prove.

Maxwell's anxiety was awakened with the break of day. Full of undefinable apprehension, he watched with intense anxiety the numerous boats which left the shore, yet anxious to

conceal, if possible, from Kate, that she was the innocent cause of his agitation. Still the brig stood on and off. Breakfast was served; the black coffee pot, the japanned sugar basin, the cracked tea-cups, and the metal spoons, the scant table cloth, scarcely hiding the green baize it was stretched to cover, all became objects of curiosity and remark to Edward and his sister. Soft bread and bad butter, with a delicate dish of pig's fry, and three or four yellow shelled eggs, were added to the repast, of which, seeing that Hilton did the honours with warmth and hospitality, if not with grace and elegance, the young sailors partook with a forced show of appetite. Maxwell alone sat restlessly, and every now and then would step up the companion to look out for the expected enemy.

At length, after another tack, the iron mast and pendant of smoke of the Southampton steamer hove in sight, and seemed to fly along the land beyond the point of Calshot. The word was given to near her, according to the former proposition of Hilton, in order that he might rake her with his glass.

Kate was no sooner made acquainted with the object of this manœuvre, than she felt a thou-

sand fears, lest—what! must I confess it?—lest Apperton, aware of all their proceedings, should follow and overtake them, and either force her to remain behind, or else become a partner of their flight; she instinctively, as it were, followed her father to the taffril, where as the steamer rounded the corner of the Southampton Water, Hilton could command her. She listened while the captain scanned the passengers as they stood grouped, pointing out the beauties of the coast which they were rapidly approaching.

"I don't know any of them," said Hilton, aside to Maxwell; "there are two queerish looking fellows—there, d'ye see?" continued he, directing the glass in Maxwell's hand, "that man with the brown great coat and the yellow silk handkerchief, and the gentlemanly-looking fellow alongside of him. You don't know him?"

Maxwell looked, and denied the acquaintance.

"Ah, no fear I think," said Hilton; "I expect our jolly-boat will be ready to put off, by the time we have stood in shore this tack, and then I defy the best of them with this wind to catch me in time to be troublesome."

"What!" said Kate, catching up the last

words of the sentence, "is there any apprehension of pursuit?"

"Why, yes," said Hilton, "they may pursue us, but they won't catch us."

"And have we been delayed," said Kate, "and my father's safety endangered, for my accommodation and convenience?"

"No, my child," said Maxwell; "it was absolutely impossible that you should have made the voyage unattended by a female. There is no danger—there will be no difficulty—all will be well."

"I trust so," said Kate.

Hilton now turned his glass towards the shore; but still no boat was to be seen approaching them, and he began to manifest some symptoms of impatience, which, in her state, alarmed poor Katharine. Hilton, however, was only grumbling at losing a fair wind, and at the remote possibility of the fellows having got drunk ashore, and swamped the boat; while Maxwell, although concealing his nervousness as much as possible from his daughter, was unable to rally from the effects of a fear, the cause of which he scarcely knew.

It was now past eleven o'clock; the steamer had reached her moorings; the horn had sound-

ed her arrival; and the bright sun beamed over the lovely island, when a boat became visible. In a few minutes more, it was recognized as the long-wished-for jolly-boat; the glass brought it near enough to present to Hilton's view the sailors, the expected woman, and a strange man! He sat muffled up in a boat-cloak, and his face was concealed. Maxwell was informed of the appearance of the unlooked-for, yet scarcely unexpected visitor.

"What 's to be done," said Maxwell, "if this man should have the power to stop me?"

"He!" said Hilton; "one man stop us; and he too, coming in my boat? No, no, might overcomes right, where I command. If he boards us, here he stops. We can make prisoners as well as he; and if he is one of those hyenas that prey upon human flesh, he'll get no cast ashore from me. The moment he steps aboard, and I hoist in my jolly boat, square go the yards, and away goes the little Mary of London."

"Then there is no fear," said Katharine.

"Excuse a joke, ma'am," said Hilton, "there may be fear, but I'll take good care there shall be no just cause for it."

A new terror now seized Mrs. Apperton; she

fancied she read treachery in the countenance of Hilton. She began to think even that he was in league against them; and that the readiness which he displayed for their accommodation in sending for the female attendant, was all part of some scheme to entrap them; in short, placed as the family were, in an entirely novel situation, a thousand circumstances bearing upon them, in every shape and direction, they knew not what to think or how to act.

"Come," said Hilton, "we shall soon know who's who; he seems shy of showing, however."

It is quite impossible to describe the palpitations which affected the hearts of the different spectators of this little scene; for Hilton himself, with all his hardiness, was not so purely immaculate as to feel himself quite at ease on the approach of a stranger, although, according to his own account, he had a mode of providing for a single visitor which could not fail in its effect.

The boat approached the brig; was alongside of her; the stranger took the man rope that was thrown him, and stepped on board. He was speedily followed up the side by one of the men who had been on shore, who seemed to

introduce him to Hilton. They touched their hats and turned towards the forecastle, whither they walked. The other sailor and the woman were during this period safe landed on the deck; and the man who had presented the stranger to Hilton, seemed waiting for orders dependent upon his decision. The conversation between the stranger and Hilton appeared earnest and animated. In the meantime the sailor, who had brought his wife to officiate as servant to Kate, was particularly anxious in presenting her to her future mistress; but neither Kate nor Maxwell had eyes or ears for any thing but the stranger, with whose arrival on board they connected something concerning themselves.

After a few minutes parley, Hilton gave orders to hoist in the boat, and take care of the gentleman's trunk and valise, which appeared to be all the sea stock he possessed. These orders were speedily obeyed, the yards square, and the good brig Mary going along at a pleasant rate through the very eye of the Needles; Hilton, however, being his own pilot, relying upon the safe principle of keeping the blue pigeon going, and not caring for advice in navigating a sea as familiar to him as his own cabin.

Maxwell lost no time in endeavouring to ascertain who the new-comer was, but he gained nothing by his interrogatories. Honour among thieves, was Hilton's answer to his questions, which, if not a complimentary evasion of them, gave him at least to understand that the gentleman in the boat-cloak had something to conceal. Neither Kate nor Edward could bring themselves to regard the stranger with tranquillity, or account for his arrival in the vessel with any thing like satisfaction to themselves. They thought they saw something like collusion between him and the captain, and Edward even went the length of believing that Hilton actually waited for his arrival by the steam packet, and sent his boat ashore under another pretence, but merely for the purpose of securing him on board.

A fresh breeze, as sailors call a wind in which a man cannot keep his hat on his head, springing up and a sea rising, all the moral griefs of the Maxwell family gave way to physical ills, and mental agitation yielded the palm to bodily sickness. If the man in the cloak, instead of what he really was, had been that personage with the tail and cloven foot, of whose walk upon earth Mr. Southey has given us so clear

a description, not one of the surgeon's family, including himself, would have cared one single atom; the overwhelming *mal de mer* laid them helpless in their respective beds, and closed their eyes to the world and all its sorrows.

During the continuance of this torpor, it may not be uninteresting for the reader to know, that Biddle, on his return to town, which was immediate, after his resignation,—expulsion it was not,—at the surgeon's, proceeded to Apperton's, and described at length, and in no very qualified terms, the ill treatment he had received, as he felt it, at the hands of his family connexions. Apperton was not in a state of mind to attend very carefully to the detail of his wrongs, but rather confined himself to ascertaining that Maxwell had received and fully comprehended the nature of his communication and the instructions that formed part of it. He seemed quite reconciled to his wife's resolution of accompanying her father; and no wonder, for he had neither roof to shelter her, nor means at hand to procure her suitable accommodation. How he was himself to escape the dangers which thickened round him, now seemed to be his principal care; and he resolved, after some little hesitation as to character and appearance, in

the hope of redeeming his losses, to figure in the same periodical publication with Somerford, and in all probability on the same day—I mean the London Gazette—when the one would exhibit himself in the character of a bankrupt, and the other in that of a field officer in his Majesty's army. It would be a curious coincidence if it should happen so; whether it will or not, time alone can determine; and in this pleasing state of doubt and agitation we must be content for the present to leave Mr. John Apperton and his irritated brother-in-law Mr. Elias Biddle.

On board the brig, the day passed and the evening came, and the landsmen and women suffered still; nor were their sensations of horror and disgust at all soothed by the smell of Irish stew and savory pie, of which Hilton and his new guest partook in the cabin with the most unmitigated appetites — the stranger having grown more cheerful, and more at his ease, as the vessel got farther from the place whence she started. Hilton, however, was assiduously attentive to the Maxwells, and left nothing undone in the shape of civilly worrying them to death, to try to eat, and to try to drink, and to try to get up, and to try to walk about; for all of

which acts of nautical gallantry every one of the party most devoutly wished him at the bottom of the element on the surface of which it was his trade to travel.

The breeze during the night moderated, so that the Mary ventured to show her top-gallant sails to the moon; and with all her canvass drawing, she ran down channel with more speed and less motion, so that at about nine o'clock, when the invalids were a "little better," the good brig Mary was laying to, a few miles off Plymouth, and to their great surprise, the stranger who had occasioned all their agitation and dismay, had disappeared, as indeed had the boat in which he arrived, and which had been the day before hoisted up by the davits on the starboard quarter.

It is odd enough, but not more strange than true, that the disappearance of this mysterious personage excited nearly as much alarm and apprehension in the breast of Maxwell as his previous presence had done. Still in sight of land, he felt himself liable to its ills and inconveniences; and his first question to Hilton was touching the abduction of his late companion.

"He's off," said Hilton, "and safe. You see that ship on our larboard quarter, with the red

striped ensign; that was his mark. She waits for him. As soon as he sets foot on board of her, you'll see she fills and away. He's bound for New York."

"Who is he," said Maxwell.

"Another of you," said Hilton; "smashed, ruined, and obliged to walk himself off; but, as I said before, there's honour amongst thieves."

"Yes," said Maxwell, "I quite well remember your observation; but how does that apply in the present instance?"

"Why," said Hilton, "you are all of you much in the same mess."

"But who is the gentleman?" asked Maxwell.

"Why, Mr. Maxwell," said Hilton, "he asked me exactly the same question about you, and the answer I gave him was, ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies. All is safe and sacred on board the good brig Mary."

"Yes," said Maxwell; "but this person came on board in your boat, with your man and the woman who was specially sent for, to attend upon my daughter. They must have mentioned"—

"Not a syllable, I'll be sworn," said Hilton; "no, no, we understand trap. There is not a

hand of mine who would not die sooner than say a word about man, woman, or child, on board my brig; this is not our first trip. Starboard, there," said Hilton, to the man at the wheel, for the Mary was now under way, edging off to pick up the boat.

" Starboard it is, sir."

" That gentleman, sir," said Hilton, " tells me news later than you can have, and that is, that Apperton must be entirely ruined. I call him Apperton, Mr. Maxwell, for I have known him from the beginning of his career.—Starboard there."

" Aye, aye, sir, starboard."

" Nothing can save him," continued the captain; " and more than a dozen others will fall by him."

" And yet he, that gentleman, did not know *us*," said Maxwell.

" No," said Hilton; " and if you had been well enough to listen, he would, in all probability, have told you your own history as the worst story he could have found to tell against your own son-in-law. It's a bad business altogether, and right glad I am that you are safe out of it."

At this period Hilton was obliged to break

off the dialogue to give directions for getting the boat aboard, which was now nearly alongside; and Maxwell retired to the cabin, which Kate was still too unwell to quit, to talk over the new intelligence he had received, which cut doubly to his heart when he recollected, that by his own activity and instrumentality, his betrayer and destroyer had become so closely connected with himself and his family, that the just opprobrium which fell upon him for his conduct, not only entailed ruin upon himself, but brought disgrace and despair even upon his darling daughter.

When the boat was re-hoisted in, and the Mary again got clear of the land, the increased motion again overset the voyagers; nor did their indisposition relax until after the ordeal of half a gale of wind in the Bay of Biscay.

Nautical adventures and sea journals are now so very common, and the voyage of the Mary was in itself so like a thousand other voyages, that it would be only wasting time to enter into the details of her progress towards the place of her destination. On the tenth day from her departure from Plymouth, the lovely island of Madeira was in sight; and before the close of the eleventh, Kate was safely conveyed in a moon-

sheel on the shoulders of two strapping African slaves, from the landing place at the Loo rock, to the house, or rather palace, of one of the most respectable English merchants at Funchal.

The elder Maxwell, who had landed first, was ready with his hospitable host to receive his daughter and her brother; and having safely deposited her in her swinging vehicle, the three gentlemen accompanied her on foot, using all their endeavours to moderate the pace of the *unfortunate* bondsmen, who trotted away with their fair load at the rate of at least five miles an hour.

When Kate heard that she was, in the first instance, to take up her residence at a merchant's house in Funchal, she formed in her mind, as indeed did her father and Edward in theirs, the outline of the establishment: a pile of stores, and cellars, and a house in a yard with gates, and a dog, and a watchman, and a weathercock, and all that sort of accompaniment. Her surprise was therefore great, when she found herself borne into a spacious quadrangle, in which, at the foot of a splendid staircase, stood grouped servants of all classes to receive her; and her surprise was rendered even still more agreeable, at finding herself welcomed to the house of her

father's friend by the gentleman's wife, a lady of extremely prepossessing person, who with a cordiality of manner, and warmth of feeling wholly inexplicable to Edward, but in some degree more intelligible to Kate herself, greeted her, and caught her in her arms as if she had been receiving a sister.

Edward saw with gratitude the devoted attentions which were paid to his father; the anxiety which seemed to anticipate every wish; and felt with sentiments of equal warmth the great and marked kindness which the master and mistress of the house evinced toward himself; and after enjoying a calm and happy evening, the delights of which were by no means weakened by the circumstance of being once again ashore, and in spacious and airy apartments, regaling on fruits ripened under the bright sun which beams over the beautiful island of which they were inhabitants, and by the recollection of the miseries of the good brig Mary, upon whose master and crew, the Madeira merchant absolutely lavished his gifts of stock and wines.

Edward, when he retired to rest, felt perfectly bewildered at the extraordinary kindness of a family of which he never had heard men-

tion made in his father's house, although it had become unfortunately very notorious all over England. The individual under whose roof they had been so nobly welcomed, was no other than the son of Hanningham, the London merchant, who, some months before, had expiated the crime of murder on the scaffold.

CHAPTER X.

"When gratitude o'erflows the swelling heart,
And breathes a free and uncorrupted praise
For benefits received; propitious Heaven
Takes such acknowledgment as fragrant incense,
And doubles all its blessings."

LILLO.

IT is scarcely possible to describe the effect produced upon the minds of the Maxwell family, by the entire and absolute change of their situation and circumstances. They had removed from the confined streets of the city of Funchal, to the beautiful *quinta* of their hospitable friends, the windows of which commanded one of the most magnificent views imaginable. The quiet and repose which they enjoyed in this lovely seclusion, afforded the most soothing contrast to the feverish excitement of the preceding fortnight; and Kate saw with pleasure and gratitude, the alteration which the very delightful transition had worked upon her dear father's heart and spirits.

No place in the world, perhaps, could have been selected for their retreat, in which old associations and habits could so soon have been gotten rid of, as this very island of Madeira. In continental travelling, the alterations of manners and customs are operated gradually, and for a considerable distance from the frontiers of a country, one is prepared by certain progressive variations in costume and language, for the change of nation. One of the most rapid changes of this sort is effected in the passage from Dover to Calais, where in a distance of thirty miles, performed by sea, under the great advantage of steam navigation, in three hours, every thing that meets the eye or the ear, is decidedly new; the language, the religion, the dresses, the manners and the customs of the people; and all, in fact, by one step from Mrs. Wright's on one side of the water, into Monsieur Quilliacq's on the other; but this transition, however striking, especially on account of the brevity of the process by which it is worked, is nothing when it comes to be compared to that, which the Englishman experiences, who leaves Falmouth on the first day of the week, and reaches Funchal perhaps on the last.

He quits England and its variable climate, its sharp easterly wind blowing, and a thick fog driving before it; he sees the apple blossoms peeping from the trees, and the smoke from the cottager's chimney curling amongst them; he travels, at a splendid pace, over fine roads, in commodious carriages; he sees the hardy labourer pursuing his toil, and his happy family greeting him to his home at the conclusion of his work, and he steps on board his vessel, and, at the end of a week, lands under a tropical sun, in another quarter of the globe, is received on his disembarkation by his friend, with his African slaves around him; is conveyed upon their shoulders, if he likes, through the narrow streets of a Portuguese city, to the extensive mansion of an English merchant; he hears high mass performed in the cathedral of Funchal, and sees a Cardinal Bishop bestow his benediction on the prostrate multitude; he meets friars by dozens in the roads, and goes to convents and visits nuns; he sees church floors raised, and the bodies of men and women, dressed in their ordinary habits, thrust into graves immediately under the surface of them, mashed into the earth by the axe and rammer of the sexton, covered with quick lime, and

then shut up again. He sees the juicy grape hang luxuriantly around him; oranges and lemons invite him to gather them: the aloe blooms in the hedge-rows; the bamboo rustling in the breeze, the banana clustering in the gardens, the walls of which are covered with millions of lizards beaming in all the brilliant colours of the rainbow.

The enclosures of the vineyards in this little Paradise are formed of pomegranates, brambles and myrtles, and that most grotesque of all shrubs in the world, the prickly pear. Pine-apples are sufficiently common to be perfectly vulgar, and peaches grow wild in the valleys, altogether forming a combination of objects curiously, aye wonderfully novel to an English eye, and certainly not to be met with, at a similar distance, in any other direction from Hyde Park Corner.

To Edward, and even to his sorrowing sister, the strangeness of everything was interesting and even exciting; but the blow which had fallen upon his father's house, had, in fact, struck deeper into the young man's heart, than could have been reasonably anticipated from the volatility of his character and disposition. He saw all his prospects blighted; he had

neglected the study of a profession, in certain reliance on his patrimony, and now, to his sorrow, found himself, at two or three-and-twenty, without pursuit, or indeed even the means of securing an existence. It was, as he felt it, no time to press his sorrows and disappointments on his father, and he therefore resolved to let the concerns of the family come to something like a settlement, before he ventured to consult the old gentleman upon the best scheme for his future proceeding.

The present great anxiety of the party was to hear from their hopeful connexion, Mr. John Apperton; upon the accounts to be contained in his letters, all their future arrangements were of course to be founded; and every sail that hove in sight was watched with longing eyes, until the certain knowledge of her name, and the port to which she belonged, killed the hopes that her first appearance had excited.

It was now that in the midst of her cares for her father, Kate addressed her letter to Somerford; the object of this appeal, if it might so be considered, was her self-vindication from a charge or suspicion of fickleness. She dwelt but slightly on the reverse of their fortunes,

and rather painted in glowing colours the actual state of their retirement, for she knew Somerford's disposition too well, to doubt, for a moment, that his first impulse on hearing of their downfall, would be to place all he possessed in the world at her father's disposal. From any thing likely to excite this disposition she carefully abstained, for her feelings of repugnance towards such an offer on his part, were considerably strengthened by the apprehension, that if it were made, her father, in his present circumstances, would not hesitate to avail himself of it.

At a great distance from a loved object, there seems such a hopelessness of a letter reaching its destination, that one can hardly be persuaded of the necessity of dispatching it at a particular moment; however, Kate was actually hurried by her kind and beautiful friend, Mrs. Hanningham, to close and seal her packet, for the master of the vessel bound to Plymouth, was actually waiting in her husband's room to carry the bags on board. If the lady had not been so assiduous in her attendance, Kate, I am almost certain, would have sealed her letter with a kiss—of friendship—as it was, this little ceremony was perhaps beneficially omitted, and

Captain Somerford's epistle dispatched to England.

Upwards of a month had now elapsed, and no news had arrived from Apperton. One or two ships from England had touched at the island, but none had letters; the newspapers, however, made several allusions to the flight of Maxwell and his family, which was instanced as one of the dreadful results of the too prevalent disposition for over speculation; and, as the London newspapers are always correct, they had dispatched him to that common receptacle for runaway rogues—the United States of America. Apperton, the great object of their solicitude, was, in fact, too insignificant a person even to be libelled or abused, and no tidings could be seen in the public journals of him, or his proceedings; and they were doomed to wait, if not patiently, at least with an assumed tranquillity, until time and opportunity should throw a little more light upon the state of his affairs.

To Edward Maxwell, Hanningham became every day more attached, and the same spirit and principle which appeared to bind the merchant and his wife to the surgeon, evidently operated so strongly in favour of his son, that, from various hints thrown out, he could no

longer doubt that Hanningham had, in the kindness of his heart, formed some plan for his advancement and even permanent settlement in life. This appeared romantic and improbable in the highest degree; and yet when Edward saw the way in which the family with whom they were domesticated treated his father and sister, he could no longer shut his eyes to the almost affectionate attachment of his new, yet affectionate friend. To account for it, he was utterly at a loss, because, as I have already said, he had never heard the name of Hanningham, except upon the unfortunate occasion of the public execution of his present friend's father, mentioned in their house; and his surprise at the warmth and devotion of these new connexions, was even increased by the total absence of anything like surprise on the part of Kate, at the exhibition of their feelings, who, to his astonishment, appeared perfectly prepared for the sort of welcome she received, and seemed to consider the unmitigated attention paid to her father, as something which she fully expected, and which she seemed to look upon as a matter of duty from her new and amiable friends.

Still time went on; day succeeded day, and

still they remained without news; until at length a signal was made for two ships from England —one an Indiaman with troops on board.

Till that moment, it had never occurred to Kate, that Somerford, disappointed of happiness in England, might, in all probability, return to a country where he had been so favourably received, and where, as Major Overall had described to her, he had so successfully carved his way to fortune; nor that should he do so, he would certainly touch at Madeira. The words Indiaman and troops, brought the idea full into her mind, and she watched from her beacon tower the coming vessels with an anxiety, which she admitted to herself she should not have experienced, if she had fancied Mr. John Apperton had been a passenger in either of them.

It was a wild fancy after all. Somerford had exchanged into a regiment quartered in England, and the ship arriving, was carrying out a detachment to India. Ladies, however devoted to the army, are not the best judges of military movements at head-quarters; and when she ran her eye over the list of passengers, she saw, with something like disappointment, that there

were none she expected, none she knew. There were, however, letters from Apperton.

He had written a long and explanatory letter to Maxwell—to Katharine, a short and cold one. It was clear that he had no intention of following them to Madeira. He had suffered the disappointment which he had experienced in his marriage, and the effect produced upon his mind by the appearance and letter of his rival (as he fancied him) Somerford, to rankle and fester in his heart; his connexions were wounded by the superiority of pretension possessed by the Maxwells; and the candid exhibition of disgust at the forwardness and brutality of Biddle, had been no doubt matter of argument and irritation in the family. The society of Kate, in which, when mixed with others, Apperton had felt himself pleased, was not suited to him, when they were alone; and the prospect of fortune and wealth which somehow had associated themselves in his mind during the progress of the negociations for their marriage, having been dissipated, he saw no reason to encumber himself with a wife, and the embarrassments of an establishment, while she displayed evident marks of satisfaction in remain-

ing separated from him, especially at a period when his time and means were fully engrossed in endeavouring to make some arrangement of his affairs, which might give him at least the advantage of personal security.

To Maxwell he had been more explicit; to him he had submitted a statement which rendered any expectation of recovery for him utterly out of the question. Apperton had been arrested, was actually in confinement, and had given the customary notice of his intention to avail himself of the benefit of the Insolvent Act; a measure, which, while it would afford him liberty and the power of re-commencing business, would leave his father-in-law without the chance of regaining one shilling of his losses; for such had been Apperton's dexterity in the management of the financial affairs of the family, that he had possessed himself of all the old gentleman's property as his own stock in trade; so that whatever sums might now be made available for his emancipation from debt, Maxwell had no claim upon him as a creditor, nor indeed did he possess one single document to show the real nature of his multifarious transactions with his speculating son-in-law.

It was now decided—Maxwell was irrecover-

ably ruined, and his family irrevocably beggared. Indeed, Apperton, in his own security, seemed to have forgotten the amount of his last remittance to Maxwell, and to have forgotten too that it must, under almost any circumstances, except those in which they actually found themselves, have been entirely expended. Still he made no allusion to their personal inconveniences or difficulties, which, as circumstances prevented his sending them any supplies, common decency, one would have thought, would have prompted him to do. But, no; his long letter was filled with self and selfishness; it was manifest that self-extrication was his object, and from several hints thrown out in the course of it, it seemed equally evident that he intended, if reproached with neglect or misconduct, to throw the whole of his justification upon the fact of his bride's misconduct and hypocrisy, neither of which he had the slightest inclination to notice, either to herself or her former lover, until by the more cunning suggestions of his vulgar relations, he had been what Mr. Biddle would call "put up" to so mean and base a manœuvre.

What a situation for Kate to find herself in! Shut out from happiness and the comforts of

life, united to a man she loved not, by a marriage, the only qualifying circumstance of which, was the prospect of remaining separated from her husband. One little week's delay might perhaps have spared her this eternity of misery; for eternal it seemed likely to be, as far as she was concerned, since even if the inclinations of both parties had been fully expressed, the laws of our country afford no relief to persons in their unfortunate situation. The only consolation in this wretched affair, she derived from the explicit manner in which her husband explained to her father the absolute impossibility of his visiting Madeira.

"Now, Edward Maxwell," said Hanningham, "now that we have seen the real character and intentions of this heartless brother-in-law of your's, it is time for me to open my mind to you on a subject which I have been for some time considering. You, with a laudable anxiety to contribute to your excellent father's comfort, and to afford a suitable protection to your dear sister, have followed the fortunes of your family, and find yourself, at three-and-twenty, a wanderer in an African island. What you have seen of us, may give you a fair idea of the comforts and avocations of an English Madeira

merchant. In the law, had you pursued it, or if you still wish to pursue it, honours and dignity are offered for your exertions, which in our plain, plodding life, we must not expect; but we may securely look forward to competence, and eventually independence. Now, if you will gratify the first wish of my heart, by coming into my house, sharing my labours and my profits, I shall receive you with the warmth of a brother; and while I make myself happy by founding your fortunes, I shall have the satisfaction of doing something towards defraying a debt of gratitude to your father, which, if I lived to the age of Methuselah, I should never be able to repay."

"My dear Hanningham," said Edward, "consider what you offer me—how have I deserved such princely conduct?"

"Why," said Hanningham, "we Madeira people are said to be extremely hospitable to strangers: how can I better keep up our character than by offering you half my house?"

"I am overwhelmed," replied young Maxwell; "I cannot reply to such unbounded liberality—I—"

"I have talked the matter over with your father before," said Hanningham; "he joins

me in the wish that you should accept my offer. It will be of mutual advantage to us; for I shall make you take your turn of duty to relieve me, while I visit England. You will have no sinecure; and then, besides, Maxwell, who knows, the time may come, when you will marry and settle."

"No, no," said Edward; "I have seen the only being who could command my affections, for the last time. I am bound never to name her; and let the spell be what it may, that is over her, nothing will induce me to marry any other living being—therefore that prospect is blank. But if I thought I dare become your debtor in so vast a sum of kindness as you offer me, the hope, the chance, of giving shelter and protection to my poor deserted sister, would induce me, on my knees, to thank you for bounty so unmerited, so——"

"Stay!" said Hanningham; "it is right I should tell you so much of a sad story, as may be necessary to exonerate me from the appearance of wishing to assume too much merit in the proposal I make, and at the same time relieve you from some of your difficulty in acceding to it. You must know, that the obligation I owe your father is of the highest and

most important character; that what I do, I should have felt it right to have done, even if I had not formed a strong and ardent personal friendship for yourself. Judge then, Edward, how gratifying it is to me, to find my inclination and my duty going hand in hand, and combining to place you in a situation which I am sure you will fill with honour and credit, and which I am proud to feel will inflict no disgrace upon the best blood in the country."

"I have no choice," said Edward; "no power to reply, but to assure you that I accept with the warmest gratitude the load of favours you have heaped upon me, and that it will be my constant endeavour through life to prove to you how warmly, how truly I feel your unexampled generosity."

"Come, then," said Hanningham, "that 's settled—give me your hand, Edward. I have suffered much misery on my poor ill-fated father's account; we must now hope for brighter days. That he was innocent of the horrid crime of which he was convicted, I am as sure as that we are alive and breathe; but that is past, and irrevocable."

This conversation, so deeply interesting, and so highly important to Edward, was here in-

terrupted by the arrival of the elder Maxwell, with whom Hanningham left Edward, in order to debate the extraordinary act of liberality which he had just performed.

"You may," said Maxwell, "with safety accept the generous offer. The tie which unites us to Hanningham is one which, although it does not in the least detract from the nobleness of his conduct, justifies, to a certain extent, your acceptance of his proposal. I mention this, not to lessen in your eyes the value of his proceeding, but to relieve you from any thing like a feeling of dependence or degradation."

"How shocking," said Edward, "it must be for Hanningham to reflect upon his father's fate! He seems assured of his innocence."

"And so am I," said Maxwell, "convinced; and more completely so from what I have heard and seen since I have been in this island; and I believe that Providence will yet eventually disclose the truth, and thus do justice to his innocence."

"It is somewhat late, though," said Edward, "as Moss once said upon the same subject, to discover a man's innocence after his execution."

"True," said Maxwell; "but still his memory would be cleared from a foul stain, which,

in a prejudiced world, leaves some of its obloquy upon his innocent relatives."

"True," said Edward; "but the world is so prone to recollect the bad part of a man's biography, and so unwilling to give credit, if they can avoid it, to any body, for good conduct, that the fact of his having been hanged, will always remain on public record, while any elucidation of his innocence will only be useful as a matter of private satisfaction—if satisfaction that may be called, which involves the certainty that our dearest relative has perished wrongfully."

"This is a subject," said Maxwell, "we had better not discuss; you may be sure that my prospects and feelings are very different from what they were when we left our country; the reception I have met with here, for which Apperton, with all his contrivances, could not be prepared, is attributable to Providence only; the miraculous circumstances which have combined to save me from destruction, are evidences of the watchfulness of the Power above, over those who earnestly pray for aid and support. The results of occurrences, of which you are ignorant, make me believe that my conduct is not deemed unworthy; but there are matters connected with the whole affair which never

must be touched upon, and therefore, Edward, accept with gratitude the means now offered you to shield and shelter a fond and affectionate sister. Time will unravel all that appears mysterious to you; and when the day shall come that you may be enlightened and informed, you will more clearly than ever, see the wonderful power of retributive justice on earth."

"There is, sir," said Edward, having got his father upon the topic of family mysteries, "one point on which I would now venture to speak—it is the interdicted one; but *now* considering the influence of the individual, who fills my thoughts by day, and haunts my dreams by night, may I for once, for only once, ask whither she is gone, and who she is? and whether you still bind me to the command you laid upon me, to forget her?"

"More than ever," said Maxwell; "it is an imperious duty for you never to name her; to lay a restraint upon your thoughts, Edward, is beyond my power or prerogative; nor do I bid you quite despair of obtaining my permission to speak of her — perhaps, to see her again; but for this, time is required; and I trust that the duties of your new situation will occupy

your mind and expel the vision from your thoughts, at least for awhile."

"But, sir," said Edward, "she is gone—you said—you told me I never could behold her again."

"Edward," said Maxwell, "when I told you so, you may be sure, I thought so. I will tell you now, that circumstances, which have since occurred, have operated strongly upon that *impossibility*. I little thought, when I spoke last to you, that you, and even much less myself, should have been driven from our country, beggars and exiles. I did not even fancy that you, for whose aggrandizement I made every effort, would have lost your patrimony, and gladly have embarked in trade in Africa; but these sudden changes have happened, and things which then seemed quite impossible, have come to pass. In what I now say, I revoke nothing of what I said before with respect to the interdiction of that subject; I must entreat you still to observe the same silence which I then enforced; but I will render it, if possible, less irksome to you, by saying,—but I must never be questioned farther,—that however improbable, it is not quite impossible, that you may again see that person."

" What, here! sir," said Edward, " in this island. I—"

" Have I not said," replied Maxwell, " that I must not be questioned farther. Be silent, pray—we are interrupted—and never, as you love me or value my comfort, recur to the subject."

Hanningham and his blooming wife, and Katharine Maxwell, who had only just been made acquainted with the arrangement about the partnership, which was so honourable to some, and so agreeable to all, here entered the room, and proceeded in due form to congratulate Edward on his accession to the firm ; and the bright glow of Kate's eyes and countenance convinced her brother that she was by no means the least happy of the party.

Still there was gloom enough in the circumstances of both families to qualify their exhilaration. With the best possible disposition to forget, as much as they could, the miseries and difficulties by which they were all more or les affected, it was impossible for them to banish from their minds the recollection, that the father of Hanningham had expiated his heinous crimes on a scaffold, and that the still living husband

of Kate, appeared, by all who had considered his conduct, to be very nearly deserving of a similar fate.

END OF VOL. II.

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